Commentary

Volume Fifty-three, Number Four, April 1972

Henry James & the Sexual-Military complex

Edward Grossman

Does IQ Matter?

David K. Cohen

Jews, Ethnics, and the American City / Marshall Sklare

Academic Freedom & the Franklin Case / Herbert L. Packer

Russians vs. Arabs / Walter Laqueur

"Relevant" Shakespeare / Jack Richardson

A Minor Cultural Event / Norman Podhoretz

BOOKS IN REVIEW: Andrew M. Greeley / David Bromwich / Rudolf Klein / Renee Winegarten

EXCHANGES: Theodore Draper, Roger Starr & Critics

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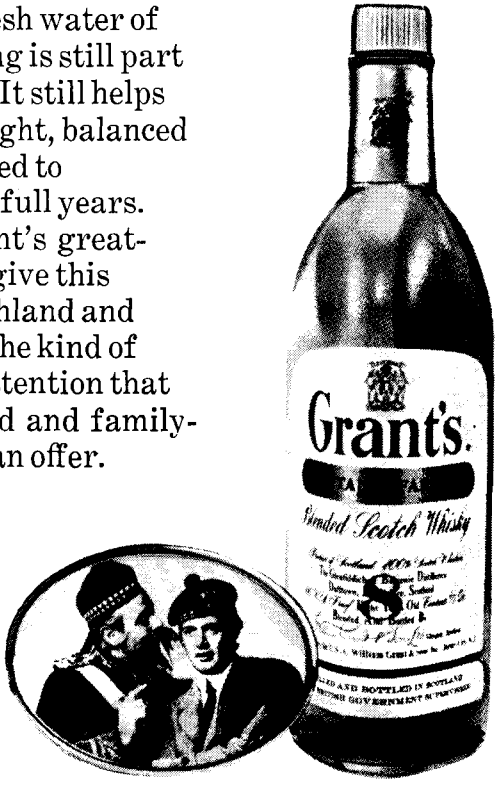

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A Minor Cultural Event

Norman Podhoretz

By a journalistically happy coincidence, Edward Grossman's "Henry James and the Sexual-Military Complex" (p. 37) appears at a time when James is, as it were, in the news again. The immediate occasion for this latest flurry of interest is the completion of Leon Edel's biography of James, the publication of whose fifth and final volume has provoked not only a debate over its own merits but a controversy of sorts over the merits of Henry James himself. Now James may or may not be the greatest of American writers, as Hilton Kramer for one continues to insist,* but Kramer is certainly right in saying that he is the only American writer ever to have produced "an *oeuvre* on the scale and quality of the European masters." Yet for one reason or another James has always had detractors, more perhaps than any other great writer has ever been forced to put up with. It is, then, neither surprising nor especially noteworthy that a new effort is now being made to denigrate his immense achievement and to damage his still apparently unsettled reputation. What is surprising, and what is noteworthy enough to amount to a minor cultural event, is that the ranks of the detractors and denigrators of James should have suddenly been swelled by the intellectually bulky presence of Philip Rahv. For Rahv is one of the critics who in the 1940's and 50's was, as he himself describes it, "engaged to some extent in helping to restore James's reputation after its long decline."

But even more to the point if we are talking about the shift in the literary winds which can be sniffed in Rahv's latest piece on James† is the fact that Rahv is also one of the critics who in the 1930's helped to establish the principle of the autonomy of art in opposition to the doctrine that art was subordinate to politics and subject to judgment on political grounds. Indeed it was on this very issue that Rahv, along with several other young literary intellectuals of that period who like him were associated with the then newly founded *Partisan Review,* broke with the Communist party. Since that time Rahv's political wanderings, in which many of his contemporaries joined, have taken him from revolutionary socialism of an anti-Stalinist cast in the late 30's, to liberal anti-Communism of a pro-American cast in the late 40's and 50's, to anti-Americanism of a New-Left cast in the middle and late 60's.** Throughout these various shifts, however, he has remained steadfast in his fealty to the idea that works of literature, although invariably swarming with political implications, are nevertheless subject to laws of their own and are not to be measured on the basis of politically inspired criteria.

Thus while Rahv has been nothing if not "trendy"—to use one of his own favorite pejorative epithets—in his political views during the last few years, he has been just as consistently resistant to the cultural manifestations of the political tendencies he has supported with an enthusiasm tempered only by the self-protectingly guarded manner which has always marked his writings on politics. So passionate in fact has he been in his opposition to the counter-culture that he has even gone to the veritably lunatic length of trying to prove that "this degeneracy," as he does not hesitate to name it, "masquerading as the boldest and bravest spirit of experiment and liberation," has no connection whatever with his beloved New Left.††

This absolute refusal to see any connection between the New Left and the counter-culture perhaps explains why he resorts to the vulgar accusation of careerism in attacking Leslie Fiedler, Susan Sontag, and all the other aging celebrators of "the exemplary attractions of the hip youth-scene" for their treachery toward the most fundamental standards of the modernist tradition in the name of that tradition itself. Actually, however, the critics in question are moved mainly by the same political considerations that are moving Rahv. The junky and trashy fashions for which they have regularly produced apologetic lucubrations are not just any junky and trashy fashions; they are junky and trashy fashions in the service of the revolution in sensibility which goes hand in hand with the revolution against the American political system and the American social order. Rahv has made it abundantly clear that he too would like to see that order and that system destroyed—not reformed, destroyed—but it is to his credit that he has been unwilling on this account to applaud any correlative debasement of the arts. He has thus been less coherent than Fiedler or Sontag and not nearly so committed to the revolution he affects to support as fervently as they. But he has also been more committed than they to literature and to what is best in the intellectual tradition by which all of them were shaped.

Or so, at least, it would have seemed before his latest piece on

* "Henry James," New York *Times Book Review,* February 6, 1972.

† "Henry James and his Cult," *New York Review of Books,* February 10, 1972.

** I have described all this in some detail in my book *Making It,* where I refer to the group of intellectuals of which Rahv has always been a leading member as "the Family."

†† "Cultural Malaise & Ultimate Culpability," *Modern Occasions,* Fall 1971.

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Henry James appeared. It is not merely that Rahv has gone over to the detractors of Henry James in this piece; it is also that his change of mind about James is blatantly political in inspiration. And this—given the role he has played up until now in resisting the politicization of literary standards—is what makes the article a cultural event.

Rahv, of course, would repudiate both charges. As to the first, he explicitly states that it is not he who has changed but the context. In the past he stressed James's greatness, although never without due acknowledgment of his faults, because James's work had failed to gain the recognition it deserved. Today the limitations of that greatness have to be stressed because James has become the object of a "cult" of uncritical adulators of which Leon Edel, whose book he is after all discussing, "is now the leading hierophant."

This may all be true, but the animus Rahv manifests against James in his article is so fierce, and the wish to belittle James is so relentlessly in control of his argument, that the one lonely concession he makes to James's greatness serves more to bewilder the reader than to qualify the attack. "In the literature of the world," Rahv declares, James "is not a figure of the first order." For "Fundamentally he belongs to the American 19th century," which is to say that he was too parochial and too Victorian in his ideas and attitudes to transcend "the determinate circumstances of his culture and background." Surely, however, the power of a writer's work to transcend the circumstances with which it is at the same time "indissolubly at one" is the main thing we mean when we call him great. If James is lacking in this power, why call him a great writer at all? One begins to suspect that Rahv only does so in order to claim a false consistency with his past opinion of James—a habit to which he is also given in speaking of the changes in his political views over the course of the years.*

However he may try to deny it, then, Rahv has cast his critical lot with the denigrators of Henry James; and however he may try to disguise it with talk of prose and plots and narrative shape, the decisive reasons are political in character. If we look carefully at his charges against James we find them centering on two related complaints. One is that James "took the social order of his time too much for granted," that his "sense of history [was] static," that he had no awareness of "the crisis of values by which the modern world is afflicted," that he was snobbishly "inclined to equate the sensibility of culture with aristocracy." Leaving aside the question of how any knowledgeable or disinterested critic could use such terms in discussing the author of *The Bostonians* and *The Princess Casamassima*—to mention only the two most obvious works that spring to mind as evidence in refutation—what is Rahv saying here but that James had a conservative temperament and that his political opinions are enough to condemn him to a relatively inferior status as an artist?

RAHV's other complaint against James is that he was too American—this despite the fact that he was, as Rahv himself indicates, an "outsider" to the America of his time and that he had to become an expatriate in order to nourish his genius. Rahv is fuzzy on the nature of James's putatively excessive Americanness, which he almost seems to equate with sexual reticence. He also tells us by way of demonstrating his point that even "the more cultivated Europeans" are unable to appreciate James. I cannot say whether this is true, but assuming that it is, what does it prove? There are, for example, French critics who think that Horace McCoy is a great American writer, and if they are simultaneously unable to make anything of James, this is surely a reflection on the perversities of the Gallic mind and not a reflection on James. Similarly with the young of our day. Rahv has generally derided their taste in literature, but he suddenly calls them to the witness stand against James, as though the fact

* See, for example, his contribution to the symposium "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited," in COMMENTARY, September 1967.

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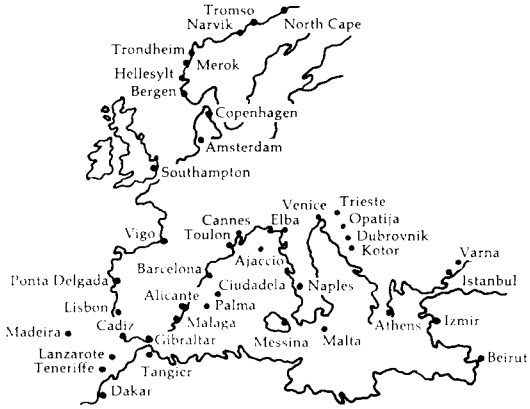

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that James is "patently deficient" in the qualities "young people" allegedly want from literature represents a judgment on James rather than on them (and as though there were no young people with different standards and tastes: it is to the point that Edward Grossman, to whom James speaks with such vivid contemporary force, has yet to reach the age of thirty).

Worse still from Rahv's point of view than the Americanness of James's temper is the favorable opinion he entertained of the American character, an opinion bodied forth in the contrast between New-World innocence and Old-World corruption James was so fond of setting up in his novels. Rahv once saw this theme as the vehicle of deep and lasting truths.* But today, he says, the whole idea strikes him as "preposterous—a transient historical fantasy generated by an exaggerated sense of national security and a buoyant self-interpretative grandiosity from which at this late date one recoils with bewilderment." *At this late date.* Am I reading too much into this entire rant when I understand it as excoriating James in effect for having failed to predict the Vietnam war or even for failing to register a protest against it? If this is indeed what Rahv is hinting at, it would not be the first time a dead writer has been condemned on the suspicion that he would not have taken the right position on Vietnam if he had lived to see the war: Mary McCarthy, whose political wanderings over the years have closely paralleled Rahv's, attacked George Orwell on precisely these grounds not very long ago.†

In short, it is the politics of anti-Americanism which has led Rahv to reconsider and downgrade the work of Henry James. There is, I must admit, a certain neatness in this development, if only because the restoration of James's reputation in the years following the Second World War owed much to the new interest so widely felt in those days in the "complex fate" which James himself had once said it was to be an American. On the other hand, there are unfunny ironies here. After all, it was for being *critical* of America that James was for so long scoffed at by "all those critics and historians who, . . . at the service of some blindly nationalistic or social creed," customarily derided him as "a self-deluded expatriate snob, a concocter of elegant if intricate trifles, a fugitive from 'reality.' . . ." Yet here we have Philip Rahv, who wrote those angry words in characterizing James's detractors,** coming very close to leveling much the same indictment against James, but in the service of a blindly anti-nationalistic social creed rather than a blindly nationalistic one. In this Rahv is as unjust to Henry James as he is disloyal to the principle of the autonomy of art.

LIKE many other members of his generation who had been youthful revolutionary socialists in the 1930's, Rahv rediscovered radicalism in the 1960's. No doubt this presented itself to his imagination as an opportunity to revive the classical *Partisan Review* synthesis of an independent radicalism in politics and "highbrow" intransigence in the arts. The trouble was that whereas the anti-Stalinist radicalism of the old *Partisan Review* had been critical of prevailing sentiment on the Left, this new radicalism was itself the dominant current of its time in the world of ideas and attitudes—more dominant even than Stalinism had been in the 30's—and could therefore offer no independent political perspective of its own. It was, moreover, an uncritical and irresponsible radicalism which spoke of replacing the American "corporate system" with a socialist order while disavowing any liking for or commitment to any socialist order actually known to man, whether of the Communist or social-democratic type.

Rahv was no different from those of his contemporaries who dishonored the more serious radicalism of their youth by their frivolous flirtation with this fashionably nihilistic new variety. Yet he was for a spell different in refusing to dishonor the courageous assertion of the freedom of art from politics which he and some of his contemporaries had made in breaking with the Communist party, and in remaining faithful to which they had done their finest work. Now he has finally betrayed even that. Thus, having groped his way back to a radicalism which in key spiritual respects resembles the Stalinism of the early 30's, he has also found his way back to an ethos in which writers are valued in accordance with their conformity or usefulness to the "correct" position of the moment and are otherwise abused or shunted aside.

HENRY JAMES will survive all this, as he has survived before. But so far as Rahv himself is concerned, the ultimate irony is that his own position of the moment has already been left behind. The strident anti-Americanism to which he continues to give expression in *Modern Occasions* (the quarterly he has been editing since terminating his long association with *Partisan Review* a couple of years ago) is no longer modish in the radical circles he so belatedly rejoined as soon as he saw them acquiring real power in the literary and intellectual communities. Just as a "Popular Front" succeeded the revolutionary militancy of the early 30's, so today a "New Populism," as it styles itself, is succeeding the New-Left revolutionism of the recent past. And just as the Popular Front promoted a benevolent attitude toward America, so the "New Populism" declares that hating America is a mistake for American radicals.

One wonders whether Rahv, when once he realizes what is happening, will provide us with yet another minor cultural event by accommodating his rhetoric and his literary opinions to this latest shift in the winds of political fashion. ■

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* See "The Heiress of All the Ages," in *Image and Idea*, a collection of Rahv's essays.

† Her piece on Orwell can be found in her collection, *The Writing on the Wall and Other Literary Essays.*

** "Attitudes toward Henry James," also in *Image and Idea.*

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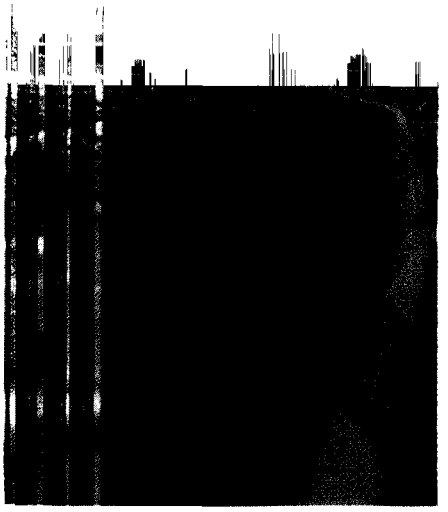

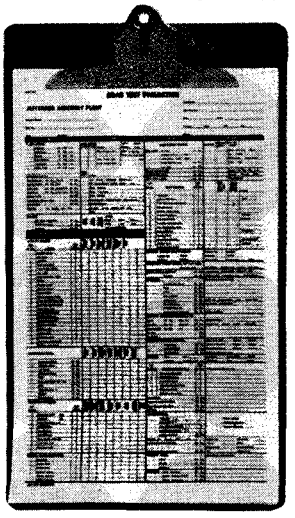

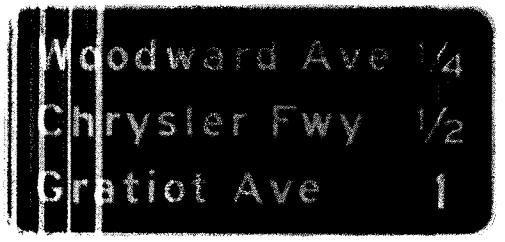

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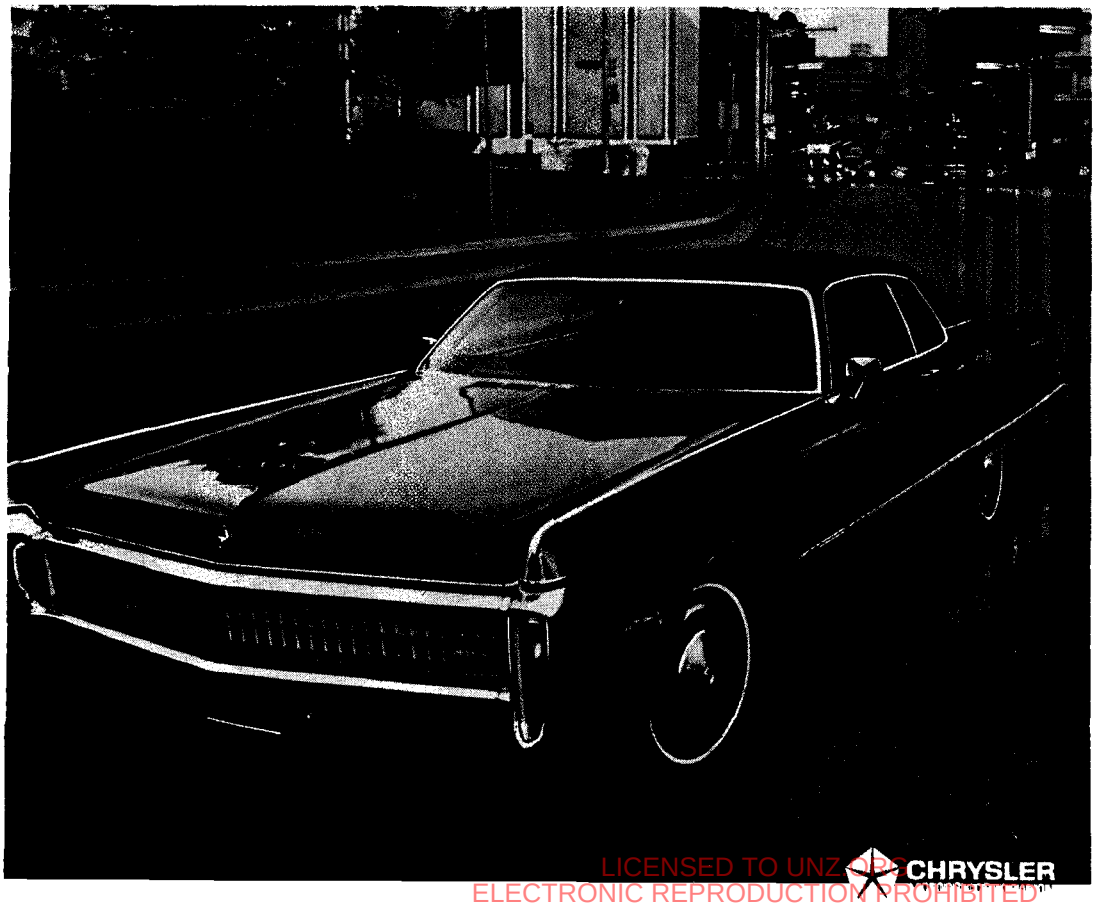

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Letters from Readers

Electric Power

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am writing to comment on Roger Starr's review of *Towards a Rational Power Policy: Energy, Politics, and Pollution,* co-authored by myself and Neil Fabricant [Books in Review, December 1971].

This book represents the results of a six-month study to delineate and come to grips with the social, political, economic, and environmental problems posed by our spiraling demands for electric power. The book is not—as Mr. Starr states—a "brief" written to block Consolidated Edison's proposed expansion of its Astoria plant. We did write a fifty-page memorandum urging rejection of the Astoria proposal, and submitted it to the Mayor in July 1970. But the book in no way resembles, nor is it based on, the memorandum, as a glance at the preface and introduction makes perfectly clear.

In our book we identify the fundamental policy issues which must be addressed to formulate a comprehensive power policy responsive to basic needs and free from obsolete promotional biases We attempt to demonstrate the need for adopting power conservation as a fundamental goal and suggest various ways for achieving that goal. . . .

We urge all concerned to look long and hard at the *growing demand* for power to determine whether the rate of growth really needs to be as high as we are currently experiencing and projecting for the future. We emphasize the demand side of the supply-demand equation because it has been neglected by the "experts" and is least understood by the public.

Energy problems traditionally have been conceived in terms of: How can we supply all power demands? The power-facility siting controversy which the New York State legislature faced last year and is facing again this year is generally viewed as a problem of: How can we site more facilities to meet growing demands? Such questions assume the projected rate of growth in consumption is socially desirable and inevitable. In our view, this fundamental assumption must be reexamined. The options are not limited to the maximization or the abolition of electric power, as Mr. Starr and other power zealots would have us believe. . . .

We hoped that our adoption of a demand-oriented approach, with emphasis on the legal, economic, and political aspects of the energy-environment dilemma, and strong support for power conservation would serve to encourage and make a significant contribution to an informed and open public debate of basic policy issues.

Mr. Starr plainly has no interest in such a debate, owing to his blind faith in accelerating power consumption and "advanced technology" as the environmental savior. His dated—and obviously well-preserved—biases are, we assume, largely responsible for his failure to report accurately or to assess objectively the bulk of our proposals.

He begins with the unfounded claim that we recommend prohibition of any further construction of fossil-fuel or nuclear power plants in New York State. Our basic approach is that "the public interest clearly requires that a national energy policy be developed before the formulation of standards, procedures, or regulations for the siting of electric power facilities." In place of the Governor's expansion plans to the power-oriented Public Service Commission (PSC) we recommend the establishment of a State Commission on Needs for Energy and Environmental Protection to devise and submit to the legislature within two years a comprehensive energy policy and environmental action plan for the State. The Commission would have fifteen members with expertise in power supply, consumer affairs, environmental protection, public health, economics, and community planning. Neither this proposal nor most of the fourteen specific areas for inquiry by the Commission which we enumerated are mentioned by Mr. Starr. Further, we recommend an interim power-facility siting procedure, to operate while new policy initiatives are being developed. This procedure contemplates the establishment of a multi-interest State Siting Board, with strong representation of environmental, health, and community interests. The Board would review and make recommendations concerning proposals for power facilities to local (for power plants) and county (for transmission facil-

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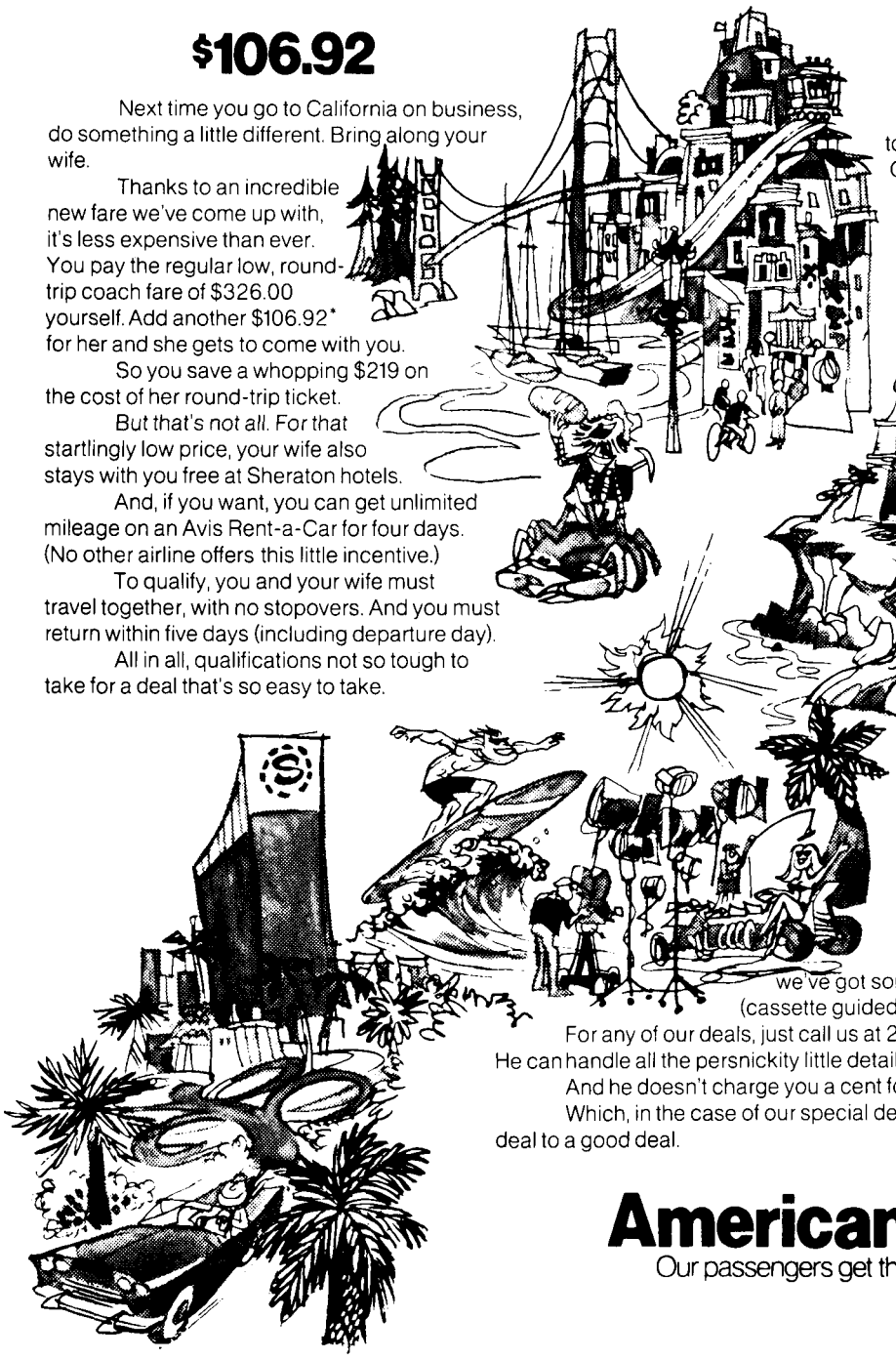

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ities) governing bodies, which could then accept, reject, or modify the Board's recommendations, subject to full judicial review as to their reasonableness. The Board would provide to the governing bodies the expertise necessary to make informed decisions. . . .

One difficult question involved in power plant siting is: How can we equitably distribute the costs and benefits associated with power production and use, e.g., to what extent (if any) should upstate communities bear the environmental costs associated with supplying power to New York City? Mr. Starr argues that remote "less polluted" areas should bear the costs of serving large, urban areas and that it is irrational to require construction of power stations in population centers that use their output. Mr. Starr's approach is inequitable on its face, particularly in view of the failure of industry and government to make meaningful efforts to curtail environmental degradation or involve the public in power facility planning. Our interim approach, by providing citizens directly affected by power facilities with the authority to require utilities to meet established environmental standards, will maximize pressure on utilities to take account of and alleviate environmental costs.

In regard to nuclear power, we document the failure of the nuclear "experts" to inform the public fully about the risks and possible consequences of radiation hazards associated with nuclear power facilities and point out that New York State, unlike several states, has ceded to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission exclusive authority to regulate the radiation and safety hazards of nuclear facilities. Our view—omitted by Mr. Starr—is that proposals to build additional nuclear facilities (including fuel reprocessing and waste-disposal facilities) cannot be responsibly evaluated and should not be supported until: (a) valid state standards are established regarding safety and radiation hazards; and (b) governmental authorities make public a comprehensive analysis of the risks and possible consequences of major accidents involving large nuclear reactors planned for service, as well as spills and leaks in storage and transit of high-level radioactive wastes produced by such facilities. We urge the state to assume its responsibility for protecting the public health and welfare, and ask the nuclear establishment to provide the public with information essential to the intelligent evaluation of projects which vitally affect their lives. If acted upon in good faith, these conditions would not interfere with the satisfaction of legitimate power needs.

Other major faults in Mr. Starr's presentation are discused below:

1) Mr. Starr claims that we provide "no data" on nitrogen oxides. His claim is false. We describe in detail studies conducted by federal air pollution control facilities, describing adverse health effects of nitrogen oxides, as well as Los Angeles-type smog to which they contribute.

2) Mr. Starr asserts that we "claim that just about nothing can be done" to control adverse environmental effects of power facilities. He is wrong. We devote an entire section to methods for controlling air pollution (including Professor Squires's proposed coal-burning techniques, which Mr. Starr praises), increasing supplies of low polluting fuels, and improving the efficiency of power generation. We also recommend immediate steps for increasing research and development. . . .

Our point is not that nothing *can be done* to control the environmental harm—but that nothing significant *has been done* by government or industry. Mr. Starr refuses to accept this unpleasant reality.

3) Mr. Starr states that we fail to consider the imposition of a use or sales tax on electricity. On the contrary, we suggest a use tax to be levied as either a flat rate, a percentage of the total electric bill, or as a rate which increases as consumption increases.

4) He claims we "never proposed" outright limitations on power consumption. He is wrong. Our position is that, if less stringent measures fail to reduce growth rates, government should:

> Impose direct legal restraints on production and use of electrical energy. This program may entail . . . total rejection of electric heating. . .; replacement of incandescent lighting by fluorescent lighting, which is three times more efficient; limits on the use of lighted billboards and neon signs for advertising; new design concepts for large office buildings, e.g., natural draft and/or regenerative heating and cooling systems. . . .

5) We propose an outright ban on utility promotional activities (including concessions to builders) designed to encourage the use of electricity; or, at least, the elimination of the present practice of charging such expenses to utility customers.

Mr. Starr opposes the elimination of utility promotional practices on the grounds that they do not contribute significantly to increased power demands. His "worldly" views are in direct conflict with the utilities' and regulators' assessment. Witness, for example, the statement in Con Edison's 1969 annual report that "new sales policies in 1969 helped to produce record new sales in 1969"; and recent actions by several state public-utility commissions restricting utility promotional practices. . . .

6) Mr. Starr implies that our criticism of electric heating as inefficient and environmentally unsound is suspect because we "do not say" that most efficiency loss occurs in power production and transmission, not at the point of use. On the contrary, we state that "electricity is converted to heat in a home at about 100 per cent efficiency" and make perfectly clear that fuel is wasted and pollution increased by electric heating because the process of generating and transmitting power is inefficient.

He also incorrectly states that we "claim 90 per cent" efficiency for direct home heating. The efficiencies claimed are between 60 per cent and 80 per cent—estimates which are widely accepted. . . .

Mr. Starr endorses efforts to promote electric heating by invoking the industry's load balancing justification. This theory holds that utilities are entitled to promote off-peak use to even out peaks and valleys in demand curves to "make the most efficient use of their equipment." However, space-heating promotion is generally linked to promotion of all-electric homes, which include air-conditioning and on the average consume three to four times as much power per year as non-electric homes. Rather than offsetting summer peak loads, promotion of electric heating increases summer peaks, as well as winter valleys, thus contributing to total demand without significantly improving load factors. . . .

7) We suggest replacing promotional rate structures, pursuant to which the unit price of electricity decreases as the amount consumed

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increases, with a structure which imposes higher costs on large users. Mr. Starr suggests, on the other hand, that promotional rates are justified because the utility industry is a decreasing cost industry and are necessary to insure that the poor have adequate power and that power is used to clean up the environment. He is wrong on all counts.

Present promotional rates discriminate against the poor by requiring low-income, small-volume users to subsidize affluent, large-volume users. A neutral rate structure would eliminate this unjust discrimination, as well as provide a substantial incentive to conserve power.

Our recommendation for rate revisions expressly seeks to avoid possible inequities—a fact Mr. Starr fails to report. We state: "Any rate change should . . . be implemented in a manner which insures that basic needs for electric power are not denied to those least able to bear increased costs."

Mr. Starr also overlooks the fact that low-income, small users are not primarily responsible for the phenomenal rise projected in electric power consumption. For example, if the 27 million people living in poverty in this country were now assigned an electric power budget equal to average residential consumption (about 7,000 kilowatt hours—kwh—per year) this would increase demand by about 189 billion kwh—which is less than 4 per cent of the projected demand of 5.83 trillion kwh in 1990.

Mr. Starr's assertion that electric power use will have to be substantially encouraged in order to prevent environmental damage is equally spurious. According to the FPC, power requirements for environmental uses in 1990, including devices to control pollution from power plants, industrial plants, and municipal sewage plants, would amount to only 3.5 per cent of projected power consumption in 1990.

Mr. Starr's suggestion that promotional rates are cost-justified has recently been rejected by Con Ed, as well as by the PSC. Incremental costs are rapidly increasing—particularly fuel and environmental protection costs—so that it can no longer be maintained that the per-unit cost of generating electricity will be reduced by increasing generating capacity. Conservation-oriented rates may well be the only way to reduce total costs of power production—by cutting down demand.

ROBERT M. HALLMAN
Center for Law and Social Policy
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was Commissioner of Air Resources for New York City during Messrs. Fabricant's and Hallman's tenure with the Environmental Protection Administration, and I would like to comment on Roger Starr's review of their book. Many of Mr. Starr's comments are made without any of the technical inputs necessary to make sound judgments. I shall attempt to track them.

1) Mr. Starr says that building the 1600 MW Astoria plant would have reduced New York City's air pollution by speeding the retirement of older Con Edison plants. Actually all of the older electric generating facilities will be shut down under the Mayoral Memorandum of Agreement. Some 1100 MW of capacity will be shut down.

2) Mr. Starr also states that "the authors give no data on the nitrogen oxides." A recent study in Chattanooga, Tennessee indicates that second-grade children suffer a significantly increased occurrence of respiratory illness when the concentrations of nitrogen oxides are at New York City's levels. Anyone who knows chemistry would suspect that nitrogen oxides produce the same kinds of health effects (e.g., emphysema, lung cancer) as sulfur oxides. The fact that nitrogen oxides contribute to eye-smarting photochemical smog is not contestable.

3) Mr. Starr complains about the statement that 1,000 to 2,000 premature deaths occur each year in New York City. This number is based on several studies of deaths in New York City. The most recent, by Dr. Leonard Greenberg, one of my predecessors, indicates the number might be as high as 10,000 per year. Premature means at ages less than the statistical average from disease other than old age. I remain appalled by Mr. Starr's assertion that premature deaths are acceptable because people died from the same diseases 100 years ago. I presume that Mr. Starr accepts the persistence of cancer because it existed 100 years ago.

4) Mr. Starr states that an increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere could lead to an increase in the earth's temperature and a melting of the polar ice-cap and then states "but there is no gen-

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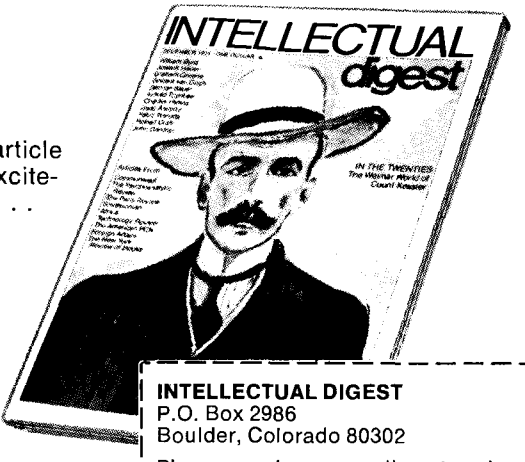

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eral agreement that present trends in power generation will necessarily lead to such a result." But if there is any chance at all, should we not be concerned to avoid such a catastrophic event?

5) There is no question that emissions from individual plants can be controlled but continued growth will render any control program meaningless.

6) Mr. Starr questions the authors' opposition to electric heating. The data presented in the book are quite accurate. Electric heating is only 35 per cent efficient, while direct heating (including the use of fans, blowers, etc.) is 80-90 per cent efficient.

Finally, Mr. Starr fails to realize that the basic argument relative to electric energy demand is how much growth is necessary or desirable. This country already uses 35 per cent of the world's natural resources with only 6 per cent of the world's population. This wastage in a world of limited resources cannot continue for long.

ROBERT N. RICKLES
New York City

ROGER STARR writes:

It is touching to find Robert Hallman so moved by my account of his—and Neil Fabricant's—book that he has written a new, slightly shorter version to replace it. Although the mild invective does liven things up a bit, this new version is scarcely more helpful than the first.

Mr. Hallman begins bravely, with a pledge "to formulate a comprehensive power policy responsive to basic needs and free from obsolete promotional biases." One might disagree as to whether anyone is free of biases, but surely the sentiment is praiseworthy. So also is the subsequent welcome promise to emphasize the "demand side" of the power question. A fair study of the "demand side" would, at a minimum, explore the price-elasticity of the electric power demand asserted by various types of industrial, commercial, and residential users. It would investigate the relationship between electric power consumption and total energy demand. It would examine the relationship among GNP, living standards, and electricity demand as the economy shifts its attention from manufacturing to service occupations.

Such a study of electric power demand might well help to formulate the rational power policy promised in the title of *Towards a Rational Power Policy.* It should also afford some basis for judging the reliability of predictions that electric energy consumption in the United States will continue to grow at exponential rates for the next three decades.

Alas, the book which Mr. Hallman and Mr. Fabricant actually wrote is very different. Instead of the "demand side" of the power question, its first 155 pages examine the "supply side" with emphasis on the dangers and the ugliness of electricity generation and transmission. The final 106 pages of text are devoted entirely to a discussion of the system of electric power generation and control which they advocate for New York State to meet the social costs of generation and transmission. Between these two thick slabs, which we are now told they did not mean to "emphasize," lies a thin slice of what we are now told is the meat of the sandwich—29 pages dealing with the "demand side" of electric power. It is clearly impossible to answer in so short a space the serious "demand" questions that require answers, and the authors scarcely try, having determined in advance that electric power demand is and was sustained by "promotion" and therefore must not only be highly price-elastic, but subject to gross stimulation through advertising and manipulated shifts in the burden of generating costs. Although I do not agree with these assumptions, I wish the authors would have made them explicit, and buttressed them with argument and data.

Their method of economic analysis suggests that this field is not really one in which they are at home. On page 176—right in the heart of the "demand section"—they tell us that commercial and industrial users consume 59 per cent of the electric power generated in New York State. They believe, apparently, that the growth reflected in this consumption does not flow from the specific efficiency advantage in centrally-generated electricity over private boiler plants, diesel motor generating sets, or kerosene lamps. On the contrary, they tell us: "[The] statistics underscore the importance to the utilities of industrial and commercial consumption and the success which the utilities' promotional rates (which of course mean the most to the largest users

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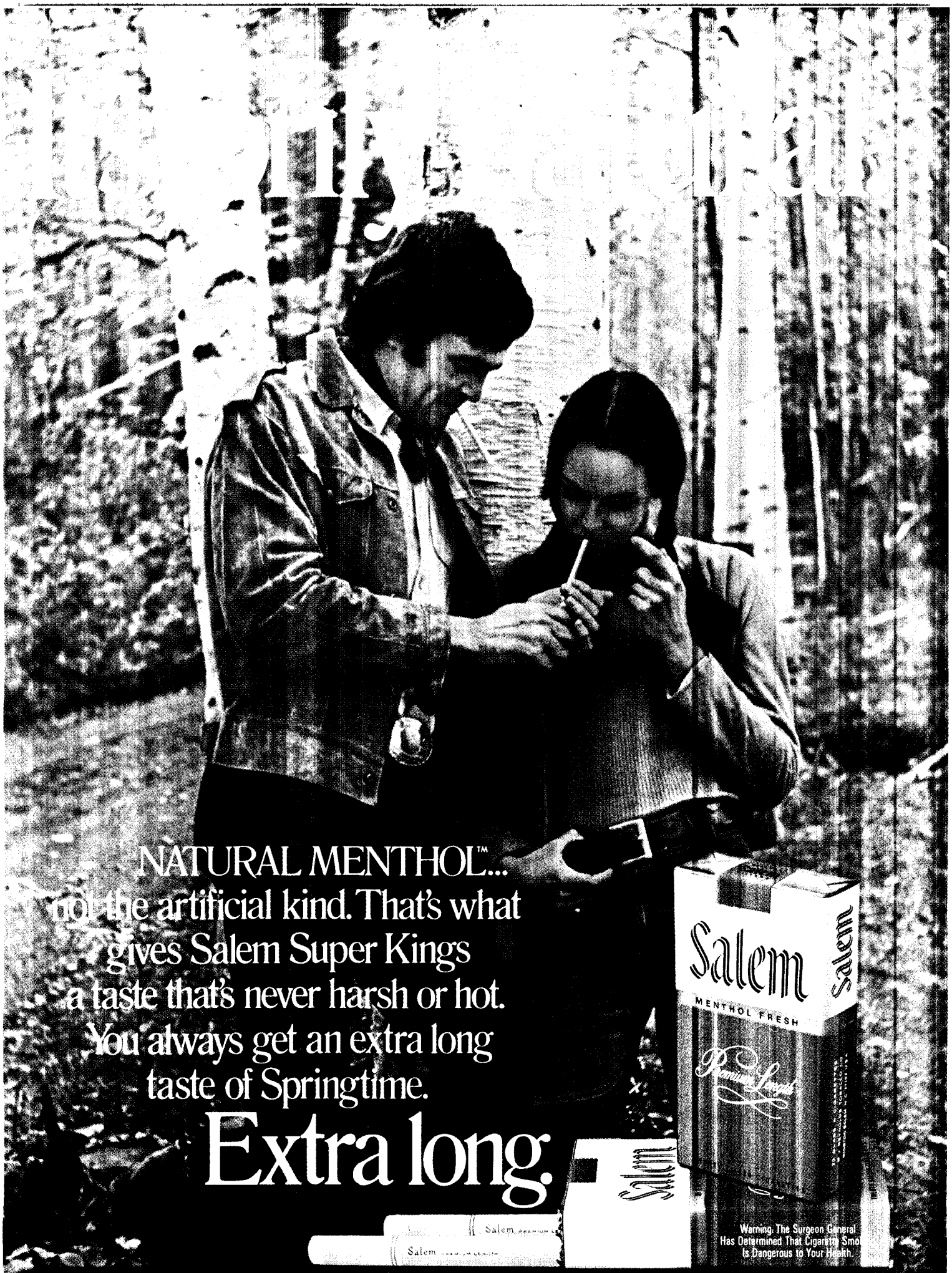

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of power) have had in developing business in the industrial and commercial sectors."

Actually, the promotional rates have had nothing whatever to do with inducing a shift from some other form of power and light supply to centrally generated electricity. The promotional rates, under which the user pays progressively less per kilowatt hour for incremental consumption as that consumption increases, merely follow the same pattern as the marginal cost curve which big users experienced in generating their own power or filling their oil lamps. The more power a manufacturer produced in his own plant, the lower his capital cost of power per unit of production. The more oil merchants burned in the lamps in their stores, the better able they were to purchase kerosene at low prices in bulk. The same kind of savings in capital and basic fuel costs are made by the central electric generating station operating at high levels. When the producer of centrally generated electric power passes the incremental capital and basic fuel cost savings along to its customers, it is not gaining a market advantage over decentralized forms of power generation; it is merely acknowledging that the facts of its experience are consonant with the facts of theirs. The attraction of centrally generated electricity to the industrial and commercial user must therefore rest on other grounds than declining marginal costs which the user achieved under older systems. Incidentally, Mr. Hallman asserts in his letter that costs do not decrease infinitely as production rises. Nobody said they did. In pointing out that power generation is a heavily capital-intensive enterprise, and that pricing must reflect that fact, I did not suggest that increases over basic fuel costs to the generator should be assessed against users on anything other than a flat rate per kilowatt hour, a rate unchanged by the number of hours consumed. This is already the case, universally, I think.

Mr. Hallman reveals, in his letter, another reason why he and Mr. Fabricant did not write the book on the "demand side" which he now claims they have done. Statistics, it seems, become slightly slippery in his hands. For example, he criticizes me for remarking that electric power will be consumed in considerable quantities if the common environment is to be protected and restored. In answer to this, he tells us that "Only 3.5 per cent of projected power consumption in 1990" will be used "to control pollution from power plants, industrial plants, and municipal sewage plants." Assuming that this covers all of the possible replacement of centrally generated electric power for more highly polluting present power forms (a new subway in New York City, for example, which might discourage automobile use), the low figure depends on a projected increase in electric consumption of 284 per cent between 1970 and 1990, a figure quoted by Messrs. Fabricant and Hallman without challenge. This means that if power production were to remain at its present level, the anti-pollution demand could *roughly* be estimated at 13 per cent of present power consumption (since some of the pollution would be produced in the course of the increased electric consumption, the figure may be high). What present uses should be shunted aside to provide this 13 per cent? If the authors really believe that this much power can be saved by educating the public as to the power consumption of specific appliances, I wish they would perform the calculations where we can see them.

They perform with similar effect in using figures on poverty. In the letter we are told that the average U.S. residence uses 7,000 kilowatt hours per year *now*. If each of the 27 million people in poverty *now* were to be provided with the same electric budget, only 4 per cent of the projected 1990 demand would be required. (I am not responsible for the troublesome apparent confusion between *residences* and *people*; the words are Mr. Hallman's.) Using his own figures, I find the percentage to be only about 3.1 per cent, but it does not ask the significant question, which is: What share of the *present* power supply is needed to take care of the *present* poor? The answer, using Mr. Hallman's premises, is about 12 per cent.

But even this 12 per cent must be low, because it assumes that the poor will have their homes wired for electricity, the sockets brimming with current, but that no electric power will be needed to manufacture the appliances, process and deliver the food, make the clothing, or supply all other goods and services in which the poor have a smaller share than the av-

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erage American family. What other demands will be curtailed to supply this power, if no more power stations are built?

Mr. Hallman hastily denies in his letter that he recommended that no more fossil-fuel electric generating plants be built in New York State. I can only repeat that the establishment, which is recommended in the book, of a State Siting Board will accomplish this objective. It would be so heavily peopled by local representatives, and so purged of those interested in the consumption and production of electric power, that its decisions can confidently be expected always to oppose the building of a power station in the locality where the committee is convened. This, *a fortiori*, applies to power stations designed primarily to serve customers in distant cities; the authors themselves claim that such a sacrifice of rural values to the needs of the immense urban population is "inequitable." Their proposal would effectuate their morality.

But, not unnaturally, wanting to retain both sides of the question, Mr. Hallman stresses in his letter that the State Siting Board would be only a temporary arrangement. He reminds us that another body which he would establish, a Temporary State Comission on Needs for Energy, etc., would come up with a permanent policy including the design of a permanent plan for passing on power plant sites. If he is serious about what he says in his letter, Mr. Hallman is attempting to tell us that local officials who will have been controlling the Siting Board will happily cede their veto power *if* a Temporary Commission asks them to. I find this drama incredible. Once local control over power sites has become New York State practice, no Temporary Commission would be likely to win the legislature's approval of a scheme to take it away.

Mr. Hallman's technique does not lead me to feel that he is more ingenuous than I. When he proposes a process dominated by local interests, he knows what its effects will be. I think that like many other advocates of specific policies, Mr. Hallman is using the technique of localism and of resistance to centralization to accomplish substantive purposes. Some advocates urge localism when their purpose is to keep new building types and new human types out of their suburbs. Mr. Hallman is preaching local control of power plant siting

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and state control of atomic energy standards (why not village control of atomic energy standards?) to prevent the construction of new electric generating facilities because he conceives of them as overwhelmingly dangerous, and because he simply doesn't like the public utility business.

Although he claims in his letter that he did not say in the book that nothing can be done to correct the adverse environmental effects of power facilities, I doubt that anyone would reach a conclusion different from mine after reading it. I quote one passage: "Some studies . . . reveal that feasible methods of reducing sulfur content [in coal] to acceptable air quality levels are still in the developmental stage and will not be available for use in electric power generation for many years. In sum, it is unrealistic to anticipate the use of low sulfur coal as a fuel for electric power generation in New York State within the foreseeable future." I could quote similar passages on all the alternative power generating possibilities. If the menace is so great, and the total popular demand so tremendous, one might as well advocate no more power plant construction. I must confess to a preference for those aristocratic thinkers who frankly state their intentions and their meaning. I am suspicious of those who conceal behind the neutral slogan of localism an aristocratic policy of continued shortages for those who are already short.

My unwillingness to concede the seriousness of the environmental menace on scanty evidence has also irritated Mr. Hallman. He claims that I neglected the data on nitrogen oxides given in the book. I would point out only that the discussion of nitrogen oxides starts with a chilling statement to the effect that nitrogen dioxide may cause cellular disintegration. But Messrs. Hallman and Fabricant, instead of supporting this statement with data, tell us about a study in Chattanooga. Here, health officials discovered a "significant increase" (no quantities specified) between a relatively high concentration of nitrogen oxides in the atmosphere and "acute respiratory disease including common colds and sore throats." Am I unfair to assume that if more serious diseases had occurred, we would have been told about them? I did not say that I am not troubled about the effect of nitrogen oxides on the human body, but only that the investigation our authors provide us with falls far short of the proofs they demand from "experts" (their quotation marks) on matters like atomic safety.

All but one of Mr. Hallman's other complaints are similarly exaggerated or imprecise. He chides me for not giving him credit for advocating a "user charge," but this misses the point of my criticism, which was that those who inveigh against a so-called promotional rate structure, based on the economics of a capital-intensive manufacturing process, should logically demand the abolition of ad valorem taxation, which greatly intensifies the capital intensity of utility economics, and its replacement by a user tax. His user tax would simply be added to present taxes.

To my theory that consumers want air-conditioning because they like it, not because it is well advertised, Mr. Hallman now offers a rebuttal: the management of Con Edison told the stockholders in an annual report that "new sales policies helped to produce record new sales in 1969." Con Edison may be right or wrong about the effectiveness of its 1969 sales policies, but I can't see what this has to do with the long preceding popularity of air-conditioning.

On one count I must apologize for a humiliating error. I describe the authors as stating that oil or gas home heating may attain 90 per cent efficiency. Mr. Hallman is right in pointing out that they claimed only 80 per cent efficiency. This is an unaccountable slip of the typewriter, perhaps stimulated by the fact that 90 per cent is the highest efficiency claimed by several investigations reported in the Guide and Data Book of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers. This is no excuse for my lapse, however. It not only slightly distorted the point which Messrs. Hallman and Fabricant were making, but deprived them of the rhetorical benefit of a lonely understatement.

IN REPLY to Robert Rickles: I did not write that the Astoria plant would have made possible a reduction in air pollution. I wrote that the New York State Society of Professional Engineers said it would have.

I did not write that I accept "premature deaths" from air pollution

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in New York City. I wrote that Fabricant and Hallman had failed to make clear what makes a death "premature." Mr. Rickles now advises us that estimates of "premature death" may vary by as much as 1,000 per cent, depending on the view of the "expert" making the estimate. This seems to confirm my feeling that the concept of "premature death" is ambiguous.

I did not ignore the possible human danger posed by an increase in carbon dioxide gas in the atmosphere. On the contrary, I brought up the question in my review because I felt the authors paid it insignificant attention. I stand on my statement of the lack of scientific consensus as to the ultimate effect of a rise in carbon dioxide concentration.

Mr. Rickles claims that direct heating is 80-90 per cent efficient. These high figures are based on laboratory conditions which I am certain Mr. Rickles would deprecate as a fair measure of pollution controls on, say, automotive engines. In practice, the efficiency of home heating is probably no greater than 50 per cent.

Mr. Rickles kindly offers to set readers on the right technological track. Some may find this offer unacceptable after reading his assurance that "anyone who knows chemistry would suspect that nitrogen oxides produce the same kind of health effect . . . as sulfur oxides." By simple dumb luck, I guess, I have not yet run into a Rickles-trained anesthesiologist who, relying on this suspicion, might have tried to administer a sulfur oxide, say SO_2, in place of "laughing gas," N_2O, a nitrogen oxide.

In conclusion, Mr. Rickles has quoted, in uniquely garbled form, the familiar statistic that of the world's current consumption of natural resources, the United States now takes 35 per cent although it holds but 6 per cent of the world population. Some, like me, interpret this to mean that billions of Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans consume too little to enjoy a reasonable standard of living—a state of affairs not unconnected historically with a high birth rate. Mr. Rickles is not so troubled by the poverty he sees as by the spotty overconsumption, as he might describe it, of certain Americans. I find it impossible to believe that the local control of power generation advocated by Mr. Rickles's former associates for New York State provides any answer to the global problem to which he refers.

Fascism, Weimar, and America

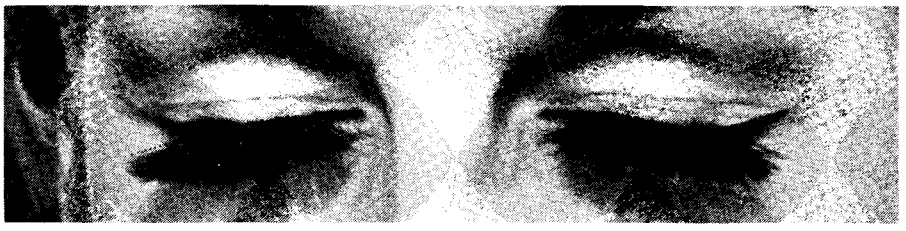
To the Editor of Commentary:

In "The Specter of Weimar" [December 1971] Theodore Draper has done a lively job in embroidering the theme that history doesn't repeat itself and in reminding us of the help the Nazis received from those who, under the Weimar Republic, "made resistance to fascism more difficult by pooh-poohing the changes that fascism would bring about."

Unfortunately, Mr. Draper seems at times to look at the future through the spectacles of the past. In some discomfort he points out that my model of a possible repressive society in the future "would seem to be only distantly related to the German model." That, I believe, was its strength—even though the model was presented in very sketchy and preliminary form. Actually, Mr. Draper should not have mentioned my article on "Friendly Fascism" in a piece attacking those who, allegedly, were overdoing some analogy between the Weimar Republic and America today. I have already made it abundantly clear that in my judgment the "it"—as developed in Germany, Italy, and Japan decades ago—could *never* happen again in America or anywhere else.

But then Mr. Draper jumps to the other extreme of suggesting that my model was "a preview of the coming American fascism" rather than of a *possible,* although not inevitable, development. He pushes this point still further in a strange way, actually going so far—despite the rather terrifying details I gave in my article—as to suggest that "our friendly American fascism is evidently not going to be so different from our friendly American democracy." But this is clearly Mr. Draper's idea, *not mine.*

Inasmuch as I am now involved in the difficult task of converting the earlier article into a full-length book, I have found Mr. Draper's article very helpful. Indeed, my own lack of clarity may have been responsible for Mr. Draper's misinterpretations. In the full book, I shall make it unmistakably clear that "friendly fas-



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cism" can be called by many names, is not inevitably coming, would be quite different from the despotic regimes of an earlier historical era, and, while rooted in certain present-day tendencies, would be very different from our present-day system.

BERTRAM M. GROSS
Graduate Program in Urban Planning
Hunter College
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

There is, as Theodore Draper notes in "The Specter of Weimar," a real problem of semantics in trying to describe whatever it is that is going on in the United States today. If by "fascism" we mean storm troopers in the streets, the end of parliamentary government, and the destruction of the Jews, then, clearly, we are a long way from anything like fascism. Yet I wonder if we aren't stuck with the word until a better one comes along.

I have no quarrel at all with Mr. Draper's main argument, which is that "if America is heading for hell or heaven, it is probably going to get there in its own way and not in anyone else's." Furthermore, I hardly need to be convinced by his demonstration that there aren't many powerful parallels between the United States today and Weimar Germany. Does anybody really argue that we are literally going to repeat the German experience of forty years ago? I doubt it. Comparing Nixon's America to Weimar is at best a figure of speech, but it can sometimes be a useful one.

It seems to me that one source of Mr. Draper's discomfort is his desire for precision in describing phenomena that don't lend themselves to exactness. Regardless of what every college catalogue announces, politics is not a science and its study is more akin to the study of, say, the metaphysical poets than it is to the study of the moons of Jupiter. It is not mere sloppiness of thought that has led some writers, myself included, to recognize a fascist or at least pre-fascist cast of mind among a disturbing number of Americans today. Instead, we are, I think, using words in a way that is allowable within the rules of the game.

Mr. Draper displays a schoolmasterly testiness toward the word "parafascism," which I coined to try to describe what I see going on around me here in California. (My model was "typhoid" and "paratyphoid"—similar in some symptoms but in fact two entirely distinct diseases.) I sympathize with Mr. Draper because "parafascism" is an awkward, ugly, and imprecise word. I don't particularly like it myself, but I haven't found a better one.

Finally, let me suggest that the notion that there is a fascist, or pre-fascist, or parafascist spirit loose in America today keeps being reinforced by the things that happen. Some months ago, someone in the executive branch in Sacramento suggested that the University of California help contribute to its own support by selling off the rare books in its libraries—which would effectively destroy some superb scholarly collections. There is of course a wide gulf between suggesting the sale of books you know to be valuable

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KENNETH LAMOTT
Tiburon, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I lived through the days of the Weimar Republic with all its promises, agonies, and frustrations. . . . But to see analogies and to raise the question of whether we are destined to suffer the fate of Weimar Germany is rather futile. History does not repeat itself. The breakdown of democracy is not necessarily followed by the rise of a dictator or the dawn of fascism. . . .

We should not minimize the social changes that have taken place in this country. The ghettoization of the cities, riots and mob rule, disregard and contempt of law and the legal process, increased crime and a rather frightening inability, or even unwillingness, to assert law and order, a vast corruption—all this leaves the ordinary citizen confused and bewildered, spiritually and physically insecure and longing for that freedom from fear that was promised him long ago. I think that this insecurity is much more a part of our lives today than it ever was during the days of Weimar. The point where people are willing to trade their freedom for security might not be reached as soon as in pre-Hitler Germany, but it will be reached sooner than we think.

. . . The economic chaos of Weimar has its counterpart in the breakdown of public services, in endless strikes, in a stifling shortage of funds, in a permanent unemployment rate created by Big Business through mergers and Big Labor by pricing itself out of the market. If the German inflation ruined the middle class, our creeping inflation has reduced the purchasing power of a considerable number of our population. . . . Inflation is the great enemy of democracy.

The youth of Weimar and America's youth today have much in common. Weimar Germany created an academic proletariat consisting of young people who had devoted the best years of their lives to the attainment of a meaningful career and who then saw their hopes and aspirations end in unemployment. America's college-educated young people are on the way to the same dead-end street.

Anti-Semitism is running rather high in these United States. The Jew finds himself buffeted by both black and white anti-Semitism. I am not so sure of the outcome. . . .

The hysterical assertion by some intellectuals that we actually live under fascism, the propaganda of the so-called liberals which undermines all authority do not do a service to the cause of democracy. Rather, the warnings of the Cassandras hasten the demise of democracy. . . .

ARNO HERZBERG
Union, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Theodore Draper's timely and serious article does not deal with two important issues: (1) the true dangers inherent in the political and social-economic reaction facing the nation at the present time, and (2) the decisive role of the most reactionary circles of big monopoly capitalism in promoting a sharp turn to the Right. . . . This can be seen even now in the general conduct of the Nixon administration and its chief financial backers. . . .

The possibility of a sharp turn to the Right carries with it the danger that fascist-like policies and methods of rule will be carried out within the framework of existing democratic political institutions. . . .

It is therefore important to know what fascist rule really is, whether the Hitler-kind, or that of Mussolini, or any other. The best characterization of fascism that comes to mind is that of Georgi Dimitrov given at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in 1935; in this definition, fascism is "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital."

If this characterization is true, as it certainly is, then the source of right-wing political pressure is to be found in those circles known as the military-industrial complex, whose reactionary pressures disturbed even President Eisenhower, and whose power has been steadily growing since Eisenhower's time.

Considering the seriousness of the political and social-economic problems now facing the nation, we must expect—and help produce—strong mass pressures to achieve satisfactory solutions, including the abolition of unemployment and the liquidation of the poverty of millions of Americans. . . . But these mass pressures for radical solutions to the problems facing the nation are bound to lead to an offensive on the part of the military-industrial complex. Such an offensive will not lead the country to Hitler-fascism but it may produce fascist-like methods of rule within the existing constitutional framework. And unless the growing pressures from the Right are met in time by effective mass pressures from the Left, this danger could become very serious.

ALEXANDER BITTELMAN
Croton-on-Hudson, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Theodore Draper is a respected historian, and what could be more pleasant than to have, from him, assurances that we will not follow the German pattern of history into some form of fascism. . . .

But is there anything in our current scene which could bring back a new, more lasting attempt at repression and an expanded militarism to inundate our values? Unhappily, there is. We should be warned that there is nothing absolute or automatic in the life of any people. The factors cited by Mr. Draper will be effective if the proponents of democracy *use them as effective weapons,* and if the anti-democratic proponents do not succeed in using the counter-factors even more successfully.

Here are only some of the counter-factors to consider:

1) An economic depression is in the making and the chief victims of it, namely the wage-and-salary-earners (with exceptions in some branches of the building industry and other minor trades) are either not organized or are led by union leaders more concerned with an extreme rightist foreign policy than with domestic welfare.

2) The Left is more splintered, if possible, than was the German Left of the 1930's and is largely isolated from the middle-of-the-roaders, resulting in a political imbalance which makes it possible for extreme rightist minorities (Reagan, Buckley, etc.) to seize power. . . .

3) The government is imprisoning advocates of peace by hundreds and thousands, but no one has been arrested for advocating war. The peace movement is being subverted and splintered by the CIA, FBI, and other agents of a dozen or so secret agencies. . . .

4) Not even the notorious Ger-

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man General Staff had as much power, money, and domination of domestic and foreign policy as the Pentagon, which is, moreover, inextricably intertwined with big capital. . . .

Generals who prepare for new wars as if they should be fought in the same circumstances and with the same tactics as previous wars are always defeated, and this will no doubt be the fate of those who look for a resurrection of the ghosts of Weimar and Hitler. To learn from the past is not to duplicate it. . . .

We should not underestimate the danger here. Even in the 18th century they knew that "the condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance." In our case it means, at the very least, creating some unity on the Left, recreating the coalition of the Left and middle-of-the-roaders similar to the one FDR achieved, and concentrating on the menace of the domestic brand of extreme rightism. . . .

SAM DARCY
Harvey Cedars, New Jersey

THEODORE DRAPER writes:

I rather agree with Bertram Gross that his article could have benefited from a little more clarity. But then, I suspect, he might have had to face a little more clearly the questionable basis of his thesis.

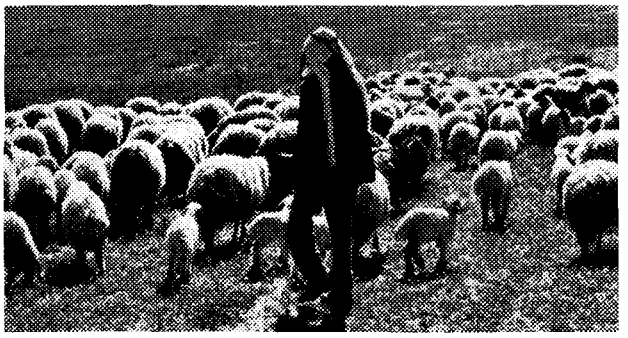
Is it true that the idea that "our friendly American fascism is evidently not going to be so different from our friendly American democracy" is mine and not his? According to Professor Gross's article, the American model of friendly fascism would have "no charismatic dictator, no one-party rule, no mass fascist party, no glorification of the state, no dissolution of legislatures, no discontinuation of elections, no distrust of reason." It would be "pluralistic in nature" with "guaranteed minimum subsistence programs, expanded social security, improved medical care, and enlarged housing and educational programs." Professor Gross added: "It would probably be a cancerous growth *within* and *around* the White House, the Pentagon, and the broader political establishment" (italics in original).

I concluded from all this that Professor Gross's model would seem to be remarkably similar to our present-day American democracy, of which it would be a continuation, not a break. This is close to the nub of the question. Should we use the term "fascism," which after all has a history that makes it meaningful, if it is going to preserve the forms and institutions and even functions of democracy? Does fascism threaten the very existence of the democratic fabric or is it going to be merely an extension and development of that fabric? Professor Gross is committed essentially to the latter interpretation which, to my mind, is both historically false and politically pernicious. If we are going to call the ills and fevers of democracy "fascism," what term are we going to have left to call the real thing? The purpose of this verbal excess may be to frighten us with the way our democracy is going; unfortunately, it also serves to make fascism less frightening than it should be. The English language is not so poor in words for tyranny and oppression that we need to rely on a term with such dubious connotations. If Professor Gross is really dealing with something that is only distantly related to the German model, why use a term that so specifically evokes that (or the Italian) model?

If I may be of some further help, much of the trouble is located in the key phrase, "friendly fascism." One way to tell real fascism is that it is not friendly; it is going to be murderously unfriendly to millions of people. This is one catchy phrase that it would be better to resist.

Kenneth Lamott has, I think, unwitttingly revealed what is wrong in his thinking. He tells us that his model was "typhoid" and "paratyphoid," similar in some symptoms but two entirely distinct diseases. From this one would gather that "fascism" and "parafascism" were two entirely distinct political phenomena. But then, only two sentences later, he lists "fascist or prefascist or parafascist," as if they belonged to the same family or series of things. If parafascist were really distinct in his mind, he could not have run these words together so glibly. I rather think that an identification with fascism is being smuggled in, and that "a real prob-

So you are going to Israel? How wonderful!



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lem of semantics" is masking a real problem of thought.

I am further persuaded that this is actually the case by Mr. Lamott's story about the suggestion to sell off some of the University of California's rare books and his final comment, "And yet, and yet. . . ." Where did the University of California get many of its rare books? From the sale of other collections, no doubt. If the sale of rare books is somehow the same as actually burning them, then those same rare books were "burned" long before the University of California got them. Presumably Mr. Lamott would be satisfied if the collections were sold as a whole, since in that way they would not be "destroyed." It should not take much wit to see the difference between selling a book which may go from collection to collection in order for an institution to remain solvent and literally burning books as a political demonstration of intellectual terror.

The more these writers protest, the more they reveal that they wish to have their fascist cake and eat it too. They flaunt and befog the term "fascism" as if they were doing a "now you see it, now you don't" act. Too much is at stake to permit such performances to go unchallenged. Fascism has come to stand for such an intolerable barbarity that it gives those who oppose it a license to use any weapons and any methods to overthrow it. That is why the most wildly extremist movements habitually employ the term as an objective description of the United States today. In these circumstances, it is best not to play with the word, not to flirt with it, unnecessarily. Almost as much damage was done in the late Weimar period by those who pinned the fascist label on the wrong thing as by those who failed to be stirred into action against it on the right thing.

The other letters go off in too many different directions for me to want to follow them in this space. I do wish to make one thing clear—I did not give, and did not intend to give, "assurances that we will not follow the German pattern of history into some form of fascism." I did not try to foreclose the indefinite future in any such sense. If worst comes to worst, we may yet get "some form of fascism." With some such general formula I would agree, though I do not think it takes us very far. But I was dealing with views that are far more immediate and concrete, namely, that the United States today is "Weimarian" in the sense that it is already well on the road to fascism or that fascist symptoms have gained such ascendancy that the Republic is in danger. It may be useful to recall that Franklin D. Roosevelt was once considered by some to be the incarnation of American fascism.

Jews & Communism

To the Editor of Commentary:

In reading "Jews under Communism" by Paul Lendvai [December 1971], I was struck by the parallel between the examples he cites from Soviet publications of anti-Semitism disguised as anti-Zionism and themes appearing in recent statements by Soviet and certain Arab delegates to the United Nations, where I have served for many years as a representative of a non-governmental organization. The charges and

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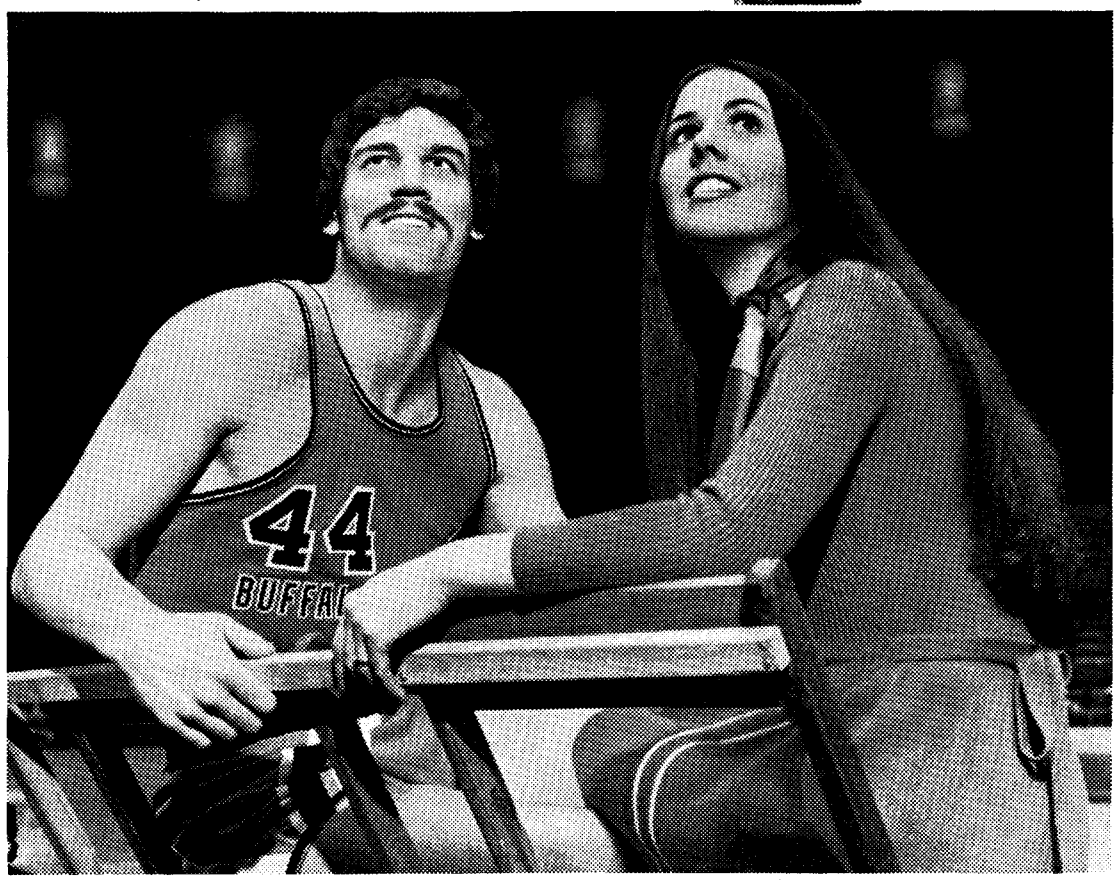

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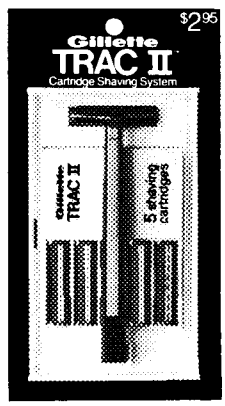

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stereotypes, indeed the very wording, are remarkably alike.

Other UN delegates, including too many from Western states, have become accustomed to these statements and seem to accept them as part of the background music of inter-state communication in the world forum. It is hard to say how much of the failure to protest reflects a sense of impotence, a fear of retaliation, a simple unwillingness to become involved—or stems from a lurking suspicion that there is some truth in the charges.

While I don't doubt that a good deal—hopefully most—of the passive acquiescence can be attributed to the first three factors, I rather fear that what Mr. Lendvai says about "the average Soviet, Polish, or Czech reader of the by-now daily diet of 'anti-Zionist' literature," also applies to a not insignificant number of UN delegates, and perhaps even to a few on the Secretariat staff and in non-governmental organizations. . . .

I will not quote here too many examples from the Soviet-Arab statements in the UN which parallel those cited by Mr. Lendvai. Fortunately, the press (at least in this country) rarely takes note of them. However, it did on one occasion, early in the last General Assembly session, following a shooting incident at the Soviet UN Mission. On that occasion, Ambassador Yakov Malik used the widespread feelings of outrage in the UN against the Jewish Defense League as a springboard for an outpouring of anti-Semitism in anti-Zionist garb in several lengthy harangues in the Assembly. A few quotations should suffice.

In his October 21 speech, Malik said:

> The fascists advocated the advantages of the higher supreme races—blondes with blue eyes. I do not know what the external signs of the Zionists are, but they have come forward with the theory of the chosen people. . . . In the United States Congress a representative criticized my statement in the Security Council. He said, "Malik does not understand what 'chosen people' means. The 'chosen people' is a religious concept; it is an old ideology of the Jews in biblical times, when they considered that the Jews were closest to God and that it was through them that God expressed His will." But that is religious racism. Why should the Jews be closer to God? Why should other peoples be further away from God?

The following day, he spoke of a recent report in "What I would describe as an organ of American Zionists—not just American Zionists—the New York *Times*," and later on in the same speech, said: "Zionism tries to represent the Jews of the entire world and take over the world—take over foreign territories and evict peoples. These are the Shylocks of today, and anyone who fails to condemn Shylock today is mistaken." . . .

In the propagation of these views, Malik and other Soviet representatives have enjoyed the enthusiastic collaboration of certain Arab delegates. The equating of the Jewish chosen-people idea and the Nazi superior-race doctrine can be found repeated in speeches by Syrian Ambassador Tomeh in the Assembly (October 21, 1971), by Tomeh's colleague Allaf in the Human Rights Commission (March 1, 1971), and by Kuwait delegate Sayegh in the Assembly's Third Committee (November 4, 1971).

Syrian delegate El-Fattal, in the Assembly debate following the October incident at the Soviet Mission, charged Jewish control of the world's mass media and, in the same debate, delegate Tomeh charged Jewish collaboration with the Nazis:

> In regard to Zionism and Israel there are certain pages of history which, no matter how much Israel and Zionist propaganda try to hide them, prove beyond any shadow of doubt the cooperation that existed in the Second World War between Zionist leaders in Palestine, in Europe, in America, and Nazi leaders, foremost among them being Eichmann. . . .

One should perhaps not be surprised that such notions are heard occasionally in some of the bodies of the United Nations, which is after all a political organization, in a period of history when political communication generally is not noteworthy for its moderate tones. Yet it is hard to accept the fact that the hawkers are not inhibited about displaying their ugly wares in *the human-rights forums* of the organization—possibly because so many of the members lack the moral courage to speak up in protest.

The hate merchants feel free to peddle these discredited myths and distortions of historical fact and religious doctrine in the very bodies which regularly adopt, by

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overwhelming vote, resolutions condemning, proscribing, and launching educational programs to combat them. The recent Assembly, for example, resolved to empower the Secretary-General to pursue a worldwide program to build up public opinion "with a view to eradicating once and for all racial beliefs based upon distortion or lack of scientific knowledge. . . ." In another resolution, it condemned "all manifestations of the ideology and practice of Nazism and racial intolerance wherever they may occur" and called upon states to "ensure that they are rigorously suppressed and prohibited."

Both the major UN human rights treaties—the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted by the General Assembly in 1966, but not yet in force) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (adopted in 1965 and in force since 1969)—condemn and proscribe in the strongest terms the dissemination of propaganda of this nature. (The Racial Treaty, it may be noted, considers "race" to encompass not only color, but also descent and national and ethnic origin.) . . .

The Racial Treaty provides, moreover, for the establishment of an implementing Committee . . . which has held four sessions since its establishment in 1969, at the last two of which it reviewed the reports from many of its 53 States Parties—which include all the Communist and most of the Arab members of the UN. Understandably, perhaps, the Committee limited itself in the main to checking the reports for compliance with formalities, lifting only very gingerly the Pandora's Box of challenges to their substantive content—an exception being an attack on Israel, itself not yet a Party to the Treaty. . . .

I am not a Sovietologist and am therefore unable to assess Mr. Lendvai's alarming thesis that the Soviet Union is engaged in a systematic campaign to promote an updated version of the "Elders of Zion" global conspiracy theory. However, irrespective of the motivation for the campaign, if indeed it is that, and whatever the source of the authority for it . . . it cannot be doubted that it is approved and encouraged by the regime. The same is true of the Arab states in question. . . .

Is it vain to hope that the gov-

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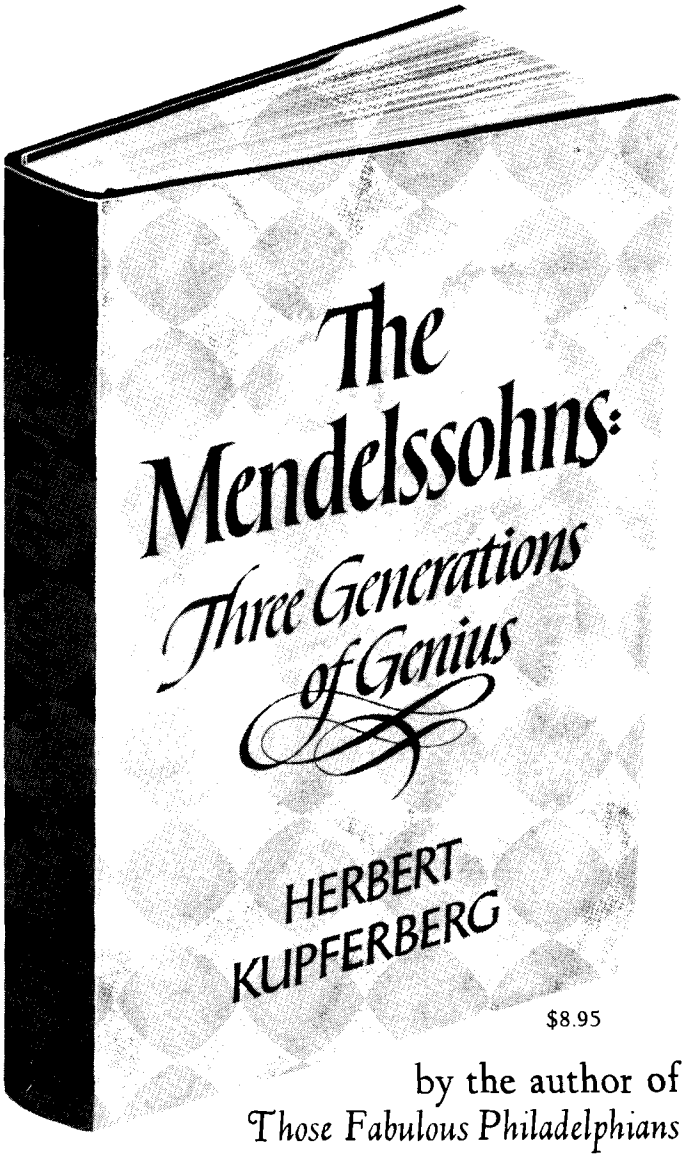

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ernments responsible for the campaign of anti-Semitism described by Mr. Lendvai, whether conducted outside or inside the UN, will comply with the "affirmations," "invitations," "urgent calls," "requests," and "appeals" of the UN bodies and put an end to it? Or, should they fail to do so, can one hope that they will be sternly challenged in those UN bodies which have adopted the principles they themselves advocate? . . .

SIDNEY LISKOFSKY
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article Paul Lendvai gives a rather long quotation from Trofim Kichko's *Judaism and Zionism,* a book he calls one of the most authoritative works linking Judaism with racism and conspiracy. Although this is probably true, in calling Kichko a "Ukrainian author," Mr. Lendvai also seems to be implying something rather peculiar.

There is in fact only one center responsible for the present anti-Semitic campaign: the Soviet Communist party. Assigning a role in this conspiracy to Kichko, and publishing his books in the Ukraine, is one of the ways the Communist party seeks to mislead world public opinion. For if Ukrainians really had any influence in the Soviet Union, they would seek to improve their own situation, which is in no way better than that of the Jews.

WASYL WYTWYCKY
Detroit, Michigan

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Paul Lendvai continues the present fashionable trend of misrepresenting Poles. He states: "The average . . . Polish . . . reader of the by now daily diet of 'anti-Zionist' literature would have to make an almost superhuman effort to remember that the stereotypes apply only to the nebulous Zionists and the far-away Israelis, not to the Jew who may happen to live next door." But Lucjan Blit, writing in the *Bulletin on Soviet and East European Jewish Affairs* (December 1969), describes how the Polish public actually reacted to official propaganda: "Reports generally indicate that during the June 1967 war between Israel and the Arab states the overwhelming sympathy of the Poles was on the side of the former and against the Arabs.". . .

Mr. Lendvai speaks of ". . . the enormous power of hostility to Jews, the centuries-old prejudice and hatred inculcated in the minds of Russians and Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Poles, Hungarians and Rumanians alike." Hugh Seton-Watson, in his article "Government Policies Toward Jews in Pre-Communist Eastern Europe" (*Bulletin on Soviet and East European Jewish Affairs,* December 1969), compares the attitudes of Rumanians, Hungarians, and Poles toward the Jews: "The anti-Semitic elements in the Polish middle classes had essentially the same motivation and attitudes as those in Rumania and Hungary. But . . . the Polish working class and peasants seem to be virtually untouched by organized anti-Semitism. The Polish peasantry was never typically pro-Jewish but there does not seem to have been any significant anti-Jewish movement. . . ."

Mr. Lendvai also states: "The long history of this hostility, which culminated in the profound indifference displayed by the majority of Russians and East Europeans to Hitler's 'Final Solution,' not to speak of the active assistance given to that program by a minority, is not in need of elaboration here." But it is a well-documented fact that many Poles (workers, peasants, scholars, clergy, nuns, etc.) helped their Jewish neighbors. . . .

EUGENE L. SLOTKOWSKI, M.D.
Chicago, Illinois

PAUL LENDVAI writes:

I did not mean to imply anything "peculiar" when I called Trofim Kichko a "Ukrainian author" apart from stating the simple fact of his nationality. Surely Mr. Wytwycky would agree that a Ukrainian (of any profession) cannot properly be called a "Soviet," let alone a "Soviet Russian."

As to Dr. Slotkowski's complaint that I continue "the present fashionable trend of misrepresenting Poles," he should first of all quote me correctly. The sentence I wrote begins: "The average Soviet, Polish, or Czech reader of the now daily diet of anti-Zionist literature. . . ." In other words, neither here nor in the other passages quoted by Dr. Slotkowski were the Poles singled out for special mention. Not only in Poland, but everywhere in Eastern Europe, the overwhelming sympathy in June 1967 was for Israel. Incidentally, an interesting sociological survey would be to find out how much of this sympathy was due to animosity *against* the Soviet backers of the Arabs rather than to a sudden upsurge of sympathy *for* the Jews. I could not deal with the complex and tragic subject of interwar history and of Polish help to the Jews during the Holocaust in an essay devoted to "Jews under Communism," but I did cover the subject in some detail in my book, *Anti-Semitism Without Jews: Communist Eastern Europe.*

Repression?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Norman Podhoretz's comments ["Liberty & the Liberals," December 1971] to the effect that the ACLU might not be able to find enough civil-liberties work to do today and that the U.S. is devoid of censorship betray a depressing ignorance of the real world. I offer the following partial list of attacks on traditional civil liberties against which we fought during the past year and a half or so in Maryland. Omitted are any "new" civil-liberties issues, to avoid quarrels over what constitutes a civil-liberties matter. It should be remembered that Maryland is probably in better shape than most states with regard to the Bill of Rights; our experience can be duplicated and then some in the other 48 ACLU affiliates.

1) A police department asserted and executed a policy of arresting any young people standing on the sidewalk talking to each other.

2) A park board demanded the right to read and approve all leaflets before they could be handed out in city parks.

3) A mayor and city council upheld the city's prohibition of all leafletting of any kind within the city limits.

4) The state legislature passed a law requiring all public-school students to say the Pledge of Allegiance in defiance of a 1943 Supreme Court decision.

5) At least a dozen people around the state were arrested for displaying peace signs on flags.

6) A college magazine was censored for attempting to issue a cover containing a picture of a burning flag.

7) The state legislature passed bills which would authorize state funds for church schools. . . .

8) Citizens in half-a-dozen towns could not run for office because they did not own property.

9) A college professor's contract

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was terminated because of his anti-war activities.

10) A female veteran was denied government benefits which she would have obtained had she been male.

11) Poor people who could not pay fines went to jail, in spite of numerous court decisions and a state law prohibiting the practice.

12) Shopping centers consistently ignored the Supreme Court's ruling that walkways should be open to leafletters.

13) An Australian youth faced deportation because he distributed an underground paper.

14) A naturalized citizen seeking a passport for dental research overseas was grilled for two hours by security investigators about why she permitted her sons to participate in anti-war demonstrations.

15) A police officer was fired for bringing grievances about vacation-time before a city council.

16) A man was fired for being a homosexual from a government job in which he had been rated a superior worker.

17) Eighteen year olds were given only two days to register to vote in a city election.

18) A state-college arts magazine lost its funding for carrying pictures of nudes which had appeared in museums.

19) A state's attorney secretly questioned a high-school teacher's students about the teacher's possible use of drugs and about his sex life, in response to a parent's complaint that the teacher used liberal magazines (*Atlantic*) in class.

20) A man was jailed for blasphemy for saying "goddamn it."

21) A religious sect was denied permission to proselytize on city streets or in parks.

22) The Movie Censorship Board continued in existence.

23) One hundred twenty-seven peaceful partygoers were arrested without a warrant, a complaint, or a legal charge because the police didn't like their looks.

24) An intoxicated youth who had voluntarily gone to a police station to be driven safely home was shot in the back and killed by an officer after a verbal disagreement.

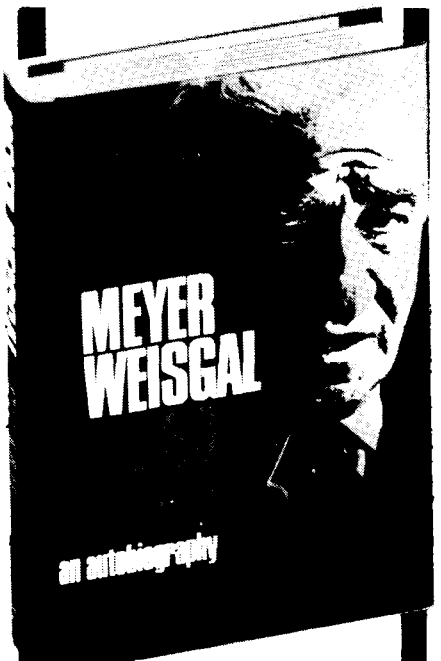
25) A police officer turned his dog loose on a sick old black man for sport.

JOHN ROEMER, III
Executive Director
American Civil Liberties
Union of Maryland
Baltimore, Maryland

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

When I say there is no censorship of any kind to speak of in the United States today, I mean that books and periodicals containing graphic descriptions and photographs of every conceivable form of sexual activity are freely published and distributed everywhere. I mean that accusations of the most vituperative kind against the American government in general and government officials in particular are freely and frequently voiced. I mean that pornographic films are openly shown in movie theaters all over this country, including the state of Maryland (for whatever the Movie Censorship Board which exists there may do, it does not prevent the exhibition of hard-core pornography). I mean that the President can with impunity be called a murderer in print or from a public platform. As against all this, Mr. Roemer tells us about local ordinances governing the distribution of leaflets and informs us that a college magazine lost its subsidy (!) when it published nude photographs while another college magazine was apparently prevented from printing a picture of a burning flag. Having studied his list, I still say there is no censorship to speak of; he says there is. I leave it to the reader to decide which of us "betrays a depressing ignorance of the real world."

As to the cases on Mr. Roemer's list which have nothing to do with censorship, they are so vaguely described that it is impossible to tell how many of them actually have anything to do with civil liberties either. But even assuming that they all represent authentic instances of government assault on civil liberties, how does that affect my point? I explicitly stated that the authorities sometimes refuse to respect the rights of dissenters. However, I also went on to say that the courts have consistently affirmed and vindicated those rights when the authorities have failed to do so. To the extent that ACLU is still working to insure that result, it is doing exactly what I believe it ought to be doing. And if this involves more work than I suggested in my piece, that would provide another reason for ACLU to resist those who have already begun politicizing it at such great cost to its credibility as one of the great guardians of due process in America.



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Henry James & the Sexual-Military Complex

Edward Grossman

THE BOSTONIANS, according to its author a "very *American* tale," was published in 1886, but the time in which the "tale" is set may be exactly one hundred years ago. In his narrative voice James says "187__." Inferring from the personal history of the hero, young Basil Ransom, who was in the Civil War, I come out with the date 1870 or '71. The idea of one whole century pleases me: a lot is supposed to happen, and change, become outmoded and incomprehensible, in a hundred years. Yet *The Bostonians* is modern. It is modern for me. Reading it today—now, sitting in the Main Reading Room of the New York Public Library with an edition of James's working *Notebooks* handy—I discover that the novel "speaks" to me.

This is unexpected. Ten years ago I plowed through *The Bostonians,* because it was on a required list in college. What I mistook for its subject—what it was "about"—bored me, and the Jamesian sentences were a drag. I was eighteen and missed the point.

There's no reason why I should have got it. It would have taken tremendous foresight for me to "identify with" Basil Ransom, for instance. Reading the book now, however, I see that James's imaginary young man has something in common with me. All proportions kept. I'm not a Mississippian up North for the first time, only an American back after living in France for a few years. I'm not a veteran of the War Between the States, or any other war. But the North is a strange country to Ransom, though in principle it is his. He, too, sometimes sees it through the eyes of a cut-rate Gulliver. And if I take the narrator's word for it (and I will, since he is cool, detached, and very shrewd) that Ransom, "something under thirty years of age," lately arrived in Manhattan,

> was very conceited, for he was much addicted to judging his age . . . thought it talkative, querulous, hysterical, maudlin, full of false ideas, of unhealthy germs, of extravagant, dissipated habits, for which a great reckoning was in store,

and that "though he thought the age too talkative . . . he liked to talk as well as any one," then I have to admit that in this Ransom is *mon semblable.* It makes me feel better to admit this, although Ransom is just a creature of James's imagination, a character with a job to do.

At least two jobs. First, to confront, and to overcome apparently, some disorders of the American scene one hundred years ago as they are embodied in some imaginary characters. Second, to hold opinions on certain subjects, in an exaggerated, smug way that James can be ironic about, but which might be close to his own way of thinking if they were not so blunt and incomplete. James's disaffection with America in the Gilded Age is known. In *The Bostonians* it is expressed with cruelty and humor, and the fun is at the expense of everyone James imagines, including Ransom, minor male characters, and the women who seem to dominate the novel. About this novel, James says,

> I wished to write a very *American* tale, a tale very characteristic of our social conditions, and I asked myself what was the most salient and peculiar point in our social life. The answer was: the situation of women, the decline of the sentiment of sex, the agitation on their behalf.*

One of my mistakes in 1960 was to assume *The Bostonians* was about feminism. I was taking the wrong cues. For example: here is Ransom, as the novel opens, having come up from his rented room in New York, being entertained by his distant Boston cousin, Olive Chancellor, in her Beacon Hill drawing room:

> This pale girl, with her light-green eyes, her pointed features and nervous manner, was visibly morbid. . . . The women he had hitherto known had been mainly of his own soft clime, and it was not often they exhibited the tendency he detected [in Olive]. That was the way he liked them.

Ransom, polite, long-suffering, but capable of sarcastic thrusts (always, to women, couched in the interrogative), wonders to himself why this

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* In F. O. Matthiessen and K. B. Murdock, eds., *The Notebooks of Henry James,* Oxford University Press, 1947.

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strange girl-relation has invited him to visit, besides doing her duty. James gives a hint in this early exchange between them:

> "Don't you care for human progress?" Miss Chancellor went on.
> "I don't know—I never saw any. Are you going to show me some?"

Before they become enemies she will try to show Ransom some people devoted to progress. She takes him along to a meeting at the house of Miss Birdseye, a senile saint, a local institution harking back to Abolitionism and Transcendentalism, Garrison and Emerson. James takes nearly a fourth of *The Bostonians* to describe Miss Birdseye's séance. In her shabby parlor the progressive-minded people of the day, heirs, such as they are, to Miss Birdseye's tradition, these "serious, tired people . . . began to glow like a company of heroes." The reform they have on their minds is no longer Abolition: now it is Female Suffrage. But the torch has not simply been passed from one generation to the next. While Miss Birdseye is "a discursive old woman, whose charity began at home and ended nowhere," the new reformers, or at least their leaders and publicists, are neither charmingly eccentric nor homely, even if Basil Ransom takes them all for "mediums, communists, vegetarians." A Mrs. Farrinder, for instance, "the great apostle of the emancipation of women," is handsome and business-like. She has an "air of success," she is "a mixture of the American matron and the public character. . . ." She uses journalism, and journalists (such as a young newspaperman at Miss Birdseye's who regards "the mission of mankind upon earth as a perpetual evolution of telegrams") use her, and it does not seem to matter that they have little in common besides being types fresh on the American scene. Olive Chancellor, pure and serious, is disgusted by "the brilliant young interviewer," who takes "merely a gossip's view of great tendencies." Yet both he and Mrs. Farrinder are portrayed by James as fairly formidable. More so than the out-and-out quacks of an older generation, like Dr. Selah Tarrant, "mesmeric healer" and spiritualist from nearby Cambridge, who is thinking of ways to "work" his daughter, Verena. This is the girl who has grown up "in the glare of lecture lamps" and who electrifies the audience at Miss Birdseye's with an impromptu speech on women's rights. It is presumably the body, and explicitly the soul, of pretty Verena Tarrant, that Basil Ransom and his queer cousin Olive struggle over in *The Bostonians*.

DETACHED and superior, restricting himself to no single "point of view," James insists on the morbidity of Olive Chancellor. When he first introduces her, he says, "She had absolutely no figure, and presented a certain appearance of feeling cold." Later, "There are women who are unmarried by accident, and others who are unmarried by option: but Olive Chancellor was unmarried by every implication of her being. She was a spinster as Shelley was a lyric poet."

Olive—I see her as about twenty-eight, Ransom's age, my age—living comfortably on Beacon Hill on a trust fund her father left, concentrates on

> The unhappiness of women! The voice of their silent suffering was always in her ears, the ocean of tears that they had shed from the beginning of time seemed to pour through her own eyes. Ages of oppression had rolled over them; uncounted millions had lived only to be tortured, to be crucified. They were her sisters, they were her own, and the day of their delivery had dawned. This was the only sacred cause; this was the great, the just revolution.

"The peculiar wretchedness," Olive thinks, "which had been the very essence of the feminine lot was a monstrous artificial imposition, crying aloud for redress." She has tried to do something:

> There were two or three pale shop-maidens whose acquaintance she had sought; but they had seemed afraid of her, and the attempt had come to nothing. She took them more tragically than they took themselves; they couldn't make out what she wanted them to do, and they always ended by being odiously mixed up with Charlie. Charlie was a young man in a white overcoat and a paper collar.

Verena Tarrant—I see her as about twenty, James sees her redheaded and curvy to Olive's dark and angular—Verena Tarrant arrives as the answer to Olive's desire, for Verena is eloquent in public, where Olive is shy and tortured, Verena is educable, she and Olive can make a revolutionary team.

Olive and Verena's consciousness-raising sessions:

> They obtained a wonderful insight into the history of feminine anguish. They perused that chapter perpetually. [They learned that] the exquisite weakness of women had never been their defense, but had only exposed them to sufferings more acute than masculine grossness can conceive. Their odious partner had trampled upon them from the beginning of time, and their tenderness, their abnegation, had been his opportunity. All the bullied wives, the stricken mothers, the dishonored, deserted maidens who had lived on the earth and longed to leave it, passed and repassed before their eyes, and the interminable dim procession seemed to stretch out a myriad hands.

Verena is a quick pupil: also, she is enchanted by the food and furnishings at Olive's house, where she comes to live, quite a change from her mesmerist father's Cambridge digs. And she is moved by the fine character of her new friend. This gives Olive hope. Yet she has worries, too.

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> There were so many things that [Verena] hadn't yet learned to dislike, in spite of her friend's earnest efforts to teach her. She had the idea vividly (that was the marvel) of the cruelty of man, of his immemorial injustice; but it remained abstract, platonic; she didn't detest him.

Even when the evidence of man's cruelty—this time, to other men—is symbolized for her before her eyes, Verena does not quite manage to detest him; she only experiences a thrill of horror. On a stroll, she and Ransom enter the recently-constructed Memorial Hall at Harvard, "consecrated to the sons of the university who fell in the long Civil War." They gaze up, James says, at

> the white, ranged tablets, each of which, in its proud, sad clearness, is inscribed with the name of a student-soldier. The effect of the place is singularly noble and solemn, and it is impossible to feel it without a lifting of the heart. It stands there for duty and honor, it speaks of sacrifice, and example, seems a kind of temple to youth, manhood, generosity. Most of them were young, all were in their prime, and all of them had fallen; this simple idea hovers before the visitor and makes him read with tenderness each name and place— names often without other history, and forgotten Southern battles. For Ransom these things were not a challenge nor a taunt; they touched him with respect, with the sentiment of beauty. He was capable of being a generous foeman, and he forgot, now, the whole question of sides and parties; the simple emotion of the old fighting-time came back to him, and the monument around him seemed an embodiment of that memory. . . .
>
> "It is very beautiful—but I think it is very dreadful!" This remark, from Verena, called him back to the present. "It's a real sin to put up such a building, just to glorify a lot of bloodshed. If it wasn't so majestic, I would have it pulled down."
>
> "That is delightful feminine logic!" Ransom answered. "If, when women have the conduct of affairs, they fight as well as they reason, surely for them too we shall have to set up memorials."
>
> Verena retorted that they would reason so well they would have no need to fight—they would usher in the reign of peace.

Verena's moments with Ransom are few, however. Her friend Olive worries about her when Verena is not in sight, and also when they are together. "Promise me not to marry!" she implores, and Verena, finally, promises. For after all, it's such a small thing, and makes Olive feel somewhat better.

James told himself in his notebook to make this strand of the "tale" a "study of one of those friendships between women which are so common in New England." There was not supposed to be anything unhealthy about them. Maybe they were the only friendships a respectable woman could have. It should not seem uncanny to me that the great feminist and angular spinster Susan B. Anthony, in a letter that did not come to light until many years after *The Bostonians* was written, addressed as "Dear Chick a dee dee" the young and pretty public speaker, Anna Dickinson. "One awful long squeeze" is what she declared a desire to give Miss Dickinson. "Promise not to *marry a man*," she implored her. "I have *plain quarters*—at 44 Bond St., New York—double bed—and big enough and good enough to take you in."*

MAYBE I should take this as innocently as it was meant. Since I can't manage to do that, the novel becomes even more "modern." Is this a new mistake? Although there is never so much as a kiss exchanged between Verena and Ransom in all of Ransom's determined wooing and Verena's agitated response, James, with all his hints, intimations, and circumlocutions, seems to know that the fight between Ransom and Olive to have the girl is passionate. But am I imagining weird undercurrents running beneath the thick prose, the superior satire? Are these people sick?

If they are, James does not seek the cause for it in "society" or "culture." The source of Ransom's *character,* thus of any disorders, is in his male "nature," not in the fact that his home and family and fortune were wrecked in a war which he (never in so many words) blames on idealistic reformers and crass businessmen. The source of Verena's character, such as it is, is more in her female "nature" than in her having "bad lecture-blood in her veins." But what about Olive? What makes her morbid? James leaves the answer unsupplied. She has, according to Ransom, "a bee in her bonnet," i.e., that is just the way she is.

But Ransom is not the most trustworthy observer. Something is gnawing at him, too. For all his seedy aristocracy, I suspect that later, after the "tale" is told, he will "make it" in New York. First, however, he must have Verena. James watches Ransom go out and get her—the male force asserting itself, powerfully assisted by nature. At a party in New York (it is to the city, already becoming itself, that Olive brings Verena to raise money and spread the word), Ransom listens for the first time to Verena in action (at Miss Birdseye's he heard nothing, fascinated by her looks) and has this reaction:

> The sort of thing she was able to do, to say, was an article for which there was more and more demand—fluent, pretty, third-rate palaver, conscious or unconscious, perfected humbug; the stupid, gregarious, gullible public . . . could swallow unlimited draughts of it. He was sure she could go, like that, for several years . . . and during that time would make a fortune sufficient to keep her in affluence evermore.

* The Stanton Collection, Library of Congress. Quoted by Robert E. Riegel in *American Feminists,* University Press of Kansas, 1963.

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Around Ransom as he reflects, "the people pushed each other a little, edged about, advanced and retreated, looking at each other with differing faces—sometimes blandly, unperceivingly, sometimes with a harshness of contemplation, a kind of cruelty," and James overhears someone say, "I'm going to have Professor Goughenheim—all about the Talmud. You must come." All the time Ransom is thinking,

> The idea that [Verena] was brilliant, that she counted as a factor only because the public mind was in a muddle, was not an humiliation but a delight to him; it was a proof that her apostleship was all nonsense, the most passing of fashions, the veriest of delusions, and that she was meant for something divinely different—for privacy, for him, for love.

Ransom can't lose. I mean, Olive can't win. She will lose her protégée, as she lost the Irish shop-girls, because, in spite of Verena's impetuous pledge, "nature" will win. Olive fights to the end, resourcefully and bitterly, but she is finally more pathetic than harmful. James, having humiliated and humbled her, at last takes pity on her: she has failed at lifemanship.

> These hours of backward clearness come to all men and women, once at least, when they read the past in the light of the present, with the reasons of things, like unobserved finger-posts, protruding where they never saw them before. The journey behind them is mapped and figured, with its false steps, its wrong observations, all its infatuated, deluded geography. They understand as Olive understood, but it is probable that they rarely suffer as she suffered.

While the *long-term heterosexual relationship* of the escaped lovers, Ransom and Verena, is prefigured in the very last lines of the book:

> "Ah, now I am glad!" said Verena. . . . But though she was glad [Ransom] presently discovered that, beneath her hood, she was in tears. It is to be feared that with the union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, these were not the last she was destined to shed.

And that is the end. I have "rooted" for the lovers, against Olive, and I, too, am glad. I give *The Bostonians* and James's *Notebooks* back to the lady at the desk and leave the library by the monumental steps at Fifth Avenue.

II

The hard daylight makes me squint. A jet knifes through the smog. The crowds press by on the sidewalk. At the Fifth Avenue bus stop, waiting for return transportation to the Village, there is a scrawny long-haired fellow, carrying an infant in a papoose-pack on his back. A young woman stands beside him. She has bare, round legs in high-heeled sandals and briefly I am sick with desire for her and a kind of hatred for her "man" that I used to feel in an earlier part of my life. I enter the Grand Central subway station, picking up a hot dog on the way and devouring it. The newsstand at the bottom of an escalator is draped with pornographic magazines. By the time the uptown express screams in my good mood has completely vanished. My jaw is tense, my tongue thick. I leave the train at 96th Street and go upstairs and along Lexington Avenue four blocks to the "Y." I pass the bulletin board with its list of scheduled literary lights, and instead of the elevator that is loading on some girl teen-agers I choose the stairs and take them three at a time cursing up to the men's locker room. I rent sneakers, a jock, shorts, and socks, change clothes, take another staircase, push a set of swinging doors, and once on the other side feel instantly better.

There is, first, the noise, and, then, the smell. The noise, intermittently deafening, is of shouting and whistling, basketballs being dribbled and bouncing off the backboards of half-a-dozen adjacent courts, iron rims of baskets shivering at a shot that is just a fraction shy, the squeaking contact of sneakers on the floor, all this sound going up to echo in the rafters and coming back amplified, making the place vibrate.

The smell hits a moment later; it is sweet and sour.

I breathe in a lungful of this air and attach myself to a group that is shooting baskets on one of the courts. I have never seen any of these people—young and not-so-young men—before. Soon, without a single whole sentence spoken, by means of grunts and nods only, two teams of three each are chosen. Skins vs. shirts. I am chosen. I am a skin.

I participate, and of the six players I am not the least talented, or the best. I run, ignoring the pain that grows, then relents, under my heart, passing off, running, shooting sometimes, twice swishing the ball cleanly through the net (a good feeling, that), giving myself over to the game. For a little while, for maybe half an hour, I don't think of anything. But then my long term in the library begins to tell. My body becomes heavy, oversensitive. I feel the gritty texture of the ball against my hand, the slick slippery flesh of the others slaps and rubs against me, sweat burns in my eyes. I am glad when the court must be relinquished and the game breaks up. Some of us shake hands, anonymous comrades sharing a bond, say "Thanks." In the locker room I undress slowly and inspect my slightly blistered feet. Slowly I take a towel from a pile that an old Negro oversees and slowly I pass through an area of shower stalls, where the water is streaming full blast, the place smelling of strong cheap

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soap and the stalls occupied by different-shaped figures soaping themselves, their arms and crotches—*what a man looks like with his two bags full and his other thing hanging down out of him** —and finally I pull open a heavy door and enter a quiet room where figures sit and recline. The steam is dense. I spread my towel out on the hot platform and lie down and close my eyes.

A SAUNA in New Hampshire where the parents of a friend I had during freshman year in college kept a country place, where I was invited for Thanksgiving, was temporarily converted by us into a steambath. This was in the fall of 1960, probably around the time I first read *The Bostonians*. My friend and I pumped water from the well and lugged some buckets into the small, tightly sealed hut that had a bench along three walls. His father said this was not the way it was meant to be done. The heat, he observed, was meant to be dry. Lounging naked, we flung handfuls of water at the stones, for the smack the water made when it hit and the steam that hissed and spread until you could hardly see through it and the sweat dripping past your eyes. His father thought this was childish, and said so, but didn't stop us from doing it. He only insisted that the place be dry for his use afterward (he would go in with his wife, taking rough towels and some small branches of evergreen). When we were finished we let the door stand open so the steam evaporated and then we stoked the space under the stones with new charcoal, until the thermometer climbed up again toward 180 degrees.

In the parlor of the old house, we waited for dinner. Clean, hungry, moist with after-sweat, we languidly turned the pages of magazines left over from the 30's. Smells from the kitchen and sounds of kitchenware and female voices reached us. We groaned. We were not allowed in the kitchen. The menu was: soup and turkey, stuffing and salad, cornbread and cranberries, baked potato, sour cream, pie, and the cider we had bought in the village.

I am remembering New Hampshire in the steam room of the "Y" almost ten years later. Those trees that were deciduous had lost most of their leaves; they lay on the ground, dry red and yellow, crackling underfoot. I wore unaccustomed boots, which my friend's mother gave me, and a red woolen jacket like a lumberjack's. At night, it turned cold, and the house having no heat, we were given—by the mother—bricks from the fireplace to put at the end of the bed. We had to share a bed. My friend snuffed out the oil lamp and we fell asleep under the high quilts. In the morning I woke up and reached down to the wood-plank floor and found my glasses and put them on. I reclined in the silence feeling the texture of the no-longer-hot brick with my toes. My friend sprawled snoring on his side of the bed. The red hair on his chest. There was frost on the leaded windowpanes; I watched as the sun melted it. The view through the imperfect windowpanes, of the sun rising over the fields and woods, rippled when I moved my head. In the corner of the bedroom there was a guitar propped up, with the words painted on it, "This Machine Kills Fascists."

Maybe it was that morning that the young people got up and made breakfast for the grown-ups. My friend's kid brother went out to chop wood for the stove, his older sister scrambled eggs on a cast-iron skillet, her husband prepared coffee for the percolator and we two tried our luck with griddle cakes on another big black skillet. When you lifted the cover from any of the various burners on top of the stove with a special handle designed for that purpose, you could see the flames leaping inside. The kid brother let the door slam behind him returning from a visit to the outhouse. "Boy, it's cold as a witch's tit out there!" he shouted. My friend's sister kept raising a finger to her lips but our activity had too much of life in it to be kept quiet, and soon the parents appeared, first the mother, in a patched-up dressing gown, feigning surprise.

Her smile exposed slightly crooked, slightly yellow teeth. Her long hair, dark red beginning to go white, was plaited into braids, which she twisted into loops about her head and pinned securely. There were wrinkles at the corners of her mouth and eyes, and across her forehead, yet her cheeks were pink (she wore no makeup in the country) and many of the lines on her face were where the flesh creased when she smiled or laughed, and seemed to disappear whenever she smiled or laughed.

Her husband, my friend's father, was small, quiet, phlegmatic. His forearms muscular. He always had a pipe between his teeth, or was filling it or knocking it out in the fireplace, or cleaning it with a tool that he would then refold and put in his pocket. A smell of sweet tobacco went along with him. During the day I noticed that he would take some work which he had brought from the city and retreat with it into a back room that had a roll-top desk and an old Underwood, would shut the door which, like all the doors in the house, was warped and did not quite close on its latch, and he could be heard murmuring into a battery-powered Dictaphone.

His sons were handsome like their mother; his daughter had his homely features. She sat at her husband's feet in the parlor as he studied (he was a medical student); she had a book she was reading that weekend, *Childbirth without Fear*.

The family came together when the food was on the table. The loudest eating and talking was done by the mother and her two sons. From time to time, the dog, excited by the noise, barked.

* James Joyce, *Ulysses*.

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There were vivid discussions on all topics, from carpentry to history, sports to cooking, there were puns, imitations, funny stories, and disputes. If an impasse was reached on a point of information the noise, as if by signal, would abate; then the father was appealed to. He cleared his throat and delivered the answer, which seemed to satisfy everyone even if it was unsatisfactory, and then they were off again on something else.

I was impressed by their energy, their competence. They all seemed to be competent at something. A skill that my friend had acquired, which he was acknowledged, by his mother explicitly, his father tacitly, to be in full possession of, was automotive. In one of the barns on the property there was a pre-war Dodge, up on blocks, and my friend tinkered with it, taking apart and putting back together again a good section of the car in the space of a long weekend. He would open the hood and lean over the fender, his upper torso lost to view, and call out, like a surgeon, for various tools to be handed to him by his younger brother. They both got black grease under their fingernails. This was in addition to the gunpowder and rifle oil that they smelled of after the three of us came back from a hike, during which we had taken target practice.

My friend's father unlocked the cabinet where a shotgun and a rifle were stored, and handed over the .22 on the understanding that the only thing that was going to be shot was tin cans. The promise given, we set out (Hoover, the collie dog, with us) for a high meadow beside a ridge further up the mountain, past where the dirt road ended. My friend knew every tree along the way. He couldn't remember when he hadn't spent at least a month of every summer in these woods. He pointed out a burrow where he was certain a rabbit was, but restrained himself from doing anything more. From the ridge, there was a view. They told me that from where I was standing three states—Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine—could be seen, and two countries—the U.S. and Canada. The wind was fresh and cold. We returned to the meadow and plunked cans. The shots made small cracks in the air like a child's cap pistol. On the way back a pair of bright-colored birds were resting on a bare branch of a tree a distance from the path we were on. My friend said, "I'll never do anything . . . at this range." He fired, and both birds took off, but one fluttered and fell. We went in to look, and after some searching, my friend's brother found the bird, lying on the dead leaves, squirming. My friend pointed the muzzle of the rifle down and shattered the bird's head. After this—maybe it was the same day—we three, minus the dog in all probability, made a trip down the mountain to pick up a newspaper and supplies. My friend did the driving, taking his brother-in-law's VW in preference to the family car, a Ford station wagon, large and powerful, that my friend had mixed feelings about. The Ford was equipped with automatic drive, for his mother's sake. He used to say when he had to drive it, "Whoever the engineer was who put Slushamatic on this machine ought to be shot." So we went down the mountain in the VW, with much shifting of gears and positive comments by my friend on German engineering. His brother pestered him to be allowed to drive a bit, and finally was promised a spell on the way back. Down at the general store there were two benches on the porch, for "Republicans" and "Democrats." The errands in the village accomplished, having turned off the state road and going up the mountain again, my friend reneged, claiming it was getting late. His brother shouted, "I'll tell Pop about that bird!" "No you wouldn't," my friend said, but he stopped the car, and let the boy drive until the last bend before the house.

In the steam room in New York the sweat pours off me.

We sat in the parlor, digesting the feast, with the lamps going and a blaze of logs and pine in the fireplace. A game of backgammon in progress. Father dozing. On the mantelpiece of the fireplace, pieces of birchbark initialed, inscribed, ten, twenty years before. The pregnant daughter, eldest child, sitting quietly, washed-out. Her mother, blooming, laughing. Her clear gray eyes. She takes me aside, we conspire. She interrogates me: where do I come from, what do I want to do in life? I tell her, seeking approval. She listens, temporarily serious, and seems satisfied. She likes me. I will be a great man.

Her sons and son-in-law succeed in getting an old player organ to function. It is in the corridor between the parlor and the dining room, a monster with discolored keys and jammed stops. They are able to get it to take on several rolls. The repertoire consists of hymns left over by the previous tenant, a farmer. The kid brother says he can sing any hymn bass ackwards because he is enrolled in a prep school where they make you sing hymns every morning, and twice on Sundays. The music whistles and resounds. The hymns are loudly sung with mock solemnity. Father wakes up. He relights his pipe. It makes my thighs ache to pump the pedals of the organ.

In the steam room, the effort of humming under my breath, *A mighty fo-ortress is our God,* makes me dizzy.

I put my head between my knees and see my friend's mother, sitting in the passenger seat in the front of the Ford, as she reaches over (past Hoover) and kisses her husband. This would have happened either at the very beginning or end of the weekend, for it was a ritual with them that whenever they arrived or departed, for a weekend or a summer, when the car came to a certain outcropping of granite which was the demarcation of the property, my friend's parents would kiss. It went back to the Depression, when

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they were young and had just bought the place for a few hundred dollars from a bank that had foreclosed. I learned these details later. My friend's father stepped on the brake, took the pipe out of his mouth. His wife moved over past the dog, put her left hand with its yellow ring on it around her husband's neck, and kissed him on the mouth. She called him by his last name, and he called her "Mother."

It was not the first marriage for either of them; they had both been married and divorced before. But this I learned later. Sporadically, at various times in our four years in college, we would be together, my "friend" and I, and I would learn more. Not really my friend, more like what, an acquaintance? I would see him from time to time, we would be hail-fellow-well-met. I found him content with life. He was proud of his parents and his family and seemed to wish me to know more about them. The first thing they did when they bought the farm in New Hampshire was to build a sauna with their own hands utilizing the region's ubiquitous stones. They met at a Popular Front meeting in 1936. There was a family newsletter, carbons of which were addressed to an anagram of first names: my friend left copies lying around his room. He said, "The only thing it takes to get *any* woman into bed with you is persistence." I listened, and didn't want to believe it. I wanted to believe that women were made of finer stuff. I resented him.

During one of these chance encounters he said Hey, why didn't I come out to his parents' house for lunch.

It was a brilliant Sunday in spring. The top of the car was down, the sun flashed through the budding branches. Maybe he wanted to show off his Porsche which he had bought secondhand and worked on. Or the girlfriend he had at that time. By all indications he had great success with women. I saw him with quite a few, they ranged from healthy-looking to beautiful. This time I crouched in the back-space of the car, between the roaring motor and the girl's hair that the wind sent flying, and we speeded out the highway and then over the suburban lanes. My friend drove fast, his muscular shoulders stretched his blue workshirt as he drove arms straight out, elbows locked, downshifting on the curves. He made fun of the other drivers, the golfers, gardeners, churchgoers. He sang folk songs and mugged into the mirror. His girl laughed breathlessly.

The house was a large place on a few acres with trees for shade and privacy. Inside, books, flowers, paintings. There was a hi-fi of little-known but excellent make that had to be assembled from a kit, and in the basement ping-pong, billiards, and the father's workshop with its electric tools, soldering irons, etc. He looked unchanged, with his pipe. His wife had lipstick on, a smear of it. My friend's sister was there with her infant. She looked better. Her husband was on duty at the hospital. The meal was served by Anna Belle, virtual member of the family, very familiar, who was never taken to New Hampshire. Although it was Sunday, the telephone was ringing constantly. Anna Belle would answer it in the kitchen and shout, "Iz foh yew, Mizz." My friend's mother, abandoning husband, son, daughter, grandchild, and guests would take it on another extension. The last time I saw my friend's parents was as he was backing out that day: they stood in the driveway, holding hands.

Last time I saw my friend was when? At graduation? No, not at graduation, at that party.

It was at a party in a mansion near the campus. A blizzard was in progress, and the powerlines were down. By the time I arrived, there were guests and crashers in every room of the house, in the corridors and on the staircases, making their way with candles and matches, laughing. Dark figures in dinner jackets, fine dresses, blue jeans, sweatshirts, togas, masks. I wander around the house in the midst of the other people. In one of the elegant bathrooms there is a tub five feet deep that you stand up in. A girl remarks to me that somebody either drowned in it or committed suicide. She is pretty and a little drunk. In each other's company we resume the tour. We find my friend. In a room that seems to be a den, or small library, by the light of a hurricane lamp, in front of an audience of a dozen or so, he is having a public dispute with a girl whom I don't know. His dress shirt is open and his black tie is unraveled, exposing the collar of a varsity tennis-team jersey. This is a freak April storm. He has his fist around a beer can. I am on the outskirts of the crowd, standing in the doorway with the girl I have picked up, who is pressing against me. My friend, still enjoying himself, looks straight in my face once, and doesn't recognize me, or cuts me. I gather that the unknown girl he is disputing with is willing to try to hypnotize him for the amusement of the audience. The audience urges him to agree. He sucks from the beer can and expresses the opinion that he is not a suitable subject for magical stunts. The audience insists. He refuses with a joke. The girl smiles a superior half-smile. "OK," my friend says. The audience murmurs expectant approval. My friend empties the beer can, crushes it, flips it away, and sits down in the obligatory chair. The girl produces a medallion on a chain and tells my friend to relax. She swings the medallion before him. He watches it with a bored, defiant expression. "You are under my power," someone says in the audience, and someone else giggles. This goes on for a time. I get bored, and my female friend is leaning against me. I leave with her, thinking of finding some place in the house to lie down. A place is found, but presently she sits up and starts to cry. I go to the bathroom, get some toilet paper, return and

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give it to her so she can dry her face. When this is achieved she wishes neither to talk nor to continue. I leave her on the bed surrounded by coats and scarves. I go to see how my friend is doing.

That is the last time I saw him. Since that night, I haven't seen him. Now and then, reports. Rumors. "He is missing in Vietnam." Someone told me he was safe on Wall Street. He was never even drafted. But in Paris I am told by someone else very definitely that his jet was hit by ground fire and the napalm exploded still attached to the wings. I suppose I should try to look him up now. I'm obliged to call his mother. But I'm afraid to so I think of something else.

III

CLICKETY-CLACK, clickety-clack, went The Girl's sandals on the cobblestones. What a racket! (Like castanets.) When we reached the grass, she took them off, ran barefoot, showing me her heels. And her hourglass figure in a cotton dress.

Not exactly the costume for riding a motorcycle.

I have driven a rented motorcycle down the Autoroute in a southeasterly direction from Paris. I have turned off and breezed through a couple of sleepy villages before arriving at the place. The Girl has held me around the waist, and held her bare legs out so as not to burn her ankles on the exhaust pipes. She has rested her face against my shoulder as well as the helmet allowed. When we get there, I leave the machine in the courtyard of the inn. We buy cheese, bread, fruit, and wine for the basket, and then walk further down the road, toward the meadows. Her high-heeled sandals drum on the smooth cobbles. High-heeled, tan-colored, with black pointed tips à la Chanel, they go Slap! against The Girl's small soft heels, adhere there momentarily to the film of moisture, then peel. Slap, stick, peel. And a noise like a snare drum on the stones. She kicks them off when we get to the grass and goes running ahead of me with a female running motion, her shoes swinging by their little straps from the index finger of her right hand. The sun is shining, the birds are singing.

My only companion in the steam room of the "Y," an old geezer, lifts himself and breaks wind.

By some genetic accident, she actually possessed an hourglass figure. She informed me with modesty and pride that it measured 90-60-90. I never had the least occasion to doubt it. She was twenty-five years old, and didn't need to suck her stomach in. She was also stupid, essentially stupid in her boring, irritating way, and nearly analphabetic, with a subscription to *Paris-Match* and her Francoise Hardy records. She had the good sense, however, to leave me. What I thought—in my surprise, then pain—was her calculation, her vengeful cruelty, was mainly the instinct for self-preservation operating. And if she also showed some calculated cruelty, who is to blame her?

Margot, having seen The Girl just once, characterized her as *mignonne:* a cutie pie. I don't think Margot was accurate on this score. The Girl didn't cry at the end ("Let's wind it up," she said), whereas Margot did cry. The Girl did her crying previously. She would quietly turn her face away on the pillow and resist all my efforts to have a look at her. Margot, who did not cry in two years, cried at the end. She looked straight at me and her eyes and nose became unattractively red. It was shocking to see, as if it were another woman, not Margot.

Feminine tears are a strange phenomenon. The Girl cried, sometimes, for the strangest reasons. She cried when I could not be bothered to shave, and my beard scraped her skin. It was like sandpaper, she said. So when I was with her, I shaved three times a day. She had a delicate skin that bruised easily, unusual in a brunette. It could have been a baby's skin had it not been so perky. Margot, a blonde, has the skin of an adult, thicker, tougher. She is older than The Girl, too, but the difference must be genetic. When she is thirty-one the wrinkles may have started appearing, but I doubt that The Girl will ever develop a hide. That is, I hope that she doesn't, for she needs to be looked at with admiration. Generally *très contente* with her appearance, she was always well-groomed, yet without being tight or compulsive about it. She used an emery board on her medium-long fingernails, and a razor to shave the dark hair on her legs. Hurrying to prepare for bed, she sliced a gash in her shin. The blood dripping down. It alarmed me, but she only smiled and put a bandage on. Margot seldom shaves. She has thin fair hair and a thick skin. The Girl spent too much of her salary on emollient soaps and perfume. Margot uses surgical scrub. When I gave her a liter of cologne for her birthday, she thanked me, and asked me if it was a hint. It was not. Could I smell the corpses on her, she asked. I could not. I would have told her if I did.

This can be an extremely important matter.

The smell of the Métro is disgusting at specific hours in the district where I lived with Margot, the population being working class. I scheduled my tutoring jobs, across town in the *seizième,* in such a way as to avoid traveling in the early morning or late afternoon. If obliged to travel at those times (the bus was very slow), I breathed through my mouth. Am I crazy on this subject as Americans are said to be? Yet it's just a question of soap and water. And the women in France, if not the men, do keep clean. Every bathroom has a *bidet.* It was an American, using my bathroom when I had my own apartment, who asked me what "that thing" was for.

Carrie in her University of Nebraska T-shirt, Keds, Wranglers, and a Boy Scout rucksack, turned up in the Flore one day in June. I had,

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by this time, been with The Girl, off and on, for a year. I had spent the preceding night in her apartment. In the morning, dashing to work, late as usual, she had probably paused two seconds to lean over the bed and kiss my shoulder, taking care not to mess her make-up. I pretended sleep until I heard the door close (softly, so as not to wake me). I had been awake for hours, because of the sun. Since a little after dawn, long before The Girl's alarm clock exploded, the air outside the open window had been full of warm, miraculous sunlight. It was a copy of the beautiful weather on the day of the country picnic.

Restless, angry, I get up, go out, buy the *Herald-Tribune* for a change, and walk over to St. Germain-des-Près for coffee and croissants at the Flore. Carrie has completed her freshman year at the institution whose emblem is emblazoned across her chest. She has arrived by student charter, is to start hitchhiking to Greece (Spain?) the next day with friends who have not yet arrived. She could not help noticing my American newspaper. Treating her to a *citron pressé,* fanciest lemonade she has ever tasted, listening to her speak the American language and to myself giving good touristic advice, it dawns on me what I would like to do to this recent arrival if I can. There is a crescent of dirt under each of her ten fingernails.

"I have a shower in my apartment. Want to use it?"

"Well . . . Do you think I should?"

"Only if you want to."

"OK."

"What's this thing for?" she inquires as I heat the water for the shower. I explain in euphemistic terms, struck by her extreme youth and slightly ashamed of myself. "Oh. I get it," she says. How old is she? Eighteen, she claims. As old as I was in New Hampshire. She has a snub nose, freckles, and long straight hair. She looks skinny, young, and half-formed in my bathrobe. I give her soap and a towel and close the bathroom door. The phone rings. It is The Girl calling, asking me to have lunch with her. Carrie is singing in the shower. I say to The Girl that I am just now going to a tutoring job—and hang up. When the American comes out of the shower she has her hair up and a towel wrapped around her head like a turban. With her neck exposed, she looks older. I extract from the refrigerator a bottle of rosé that The Girl has recently given me. Carrie and I climb up to the roof through the trap-door and sit in the sun so her hair can dry. The Eiffel Tower is indicated and its history told, as also the dome of Les Invalides, the old soldiers' home. Carrie looks at the sights, sips her wine. "I'm getting sleepy," she says. We return to my room. She requires me to make it as dark as I can—she does not like to be looked at. The phone rings while we are at it, slightly increasing my small pleasure. I doze afterward, but Carrie is all energy, as if revived. She must go and meet her arriving friends at the youth hostel.

I suppose, sweating in the "Y," that I was lucky this American didn't leave me any *petit souvenir.*

MARGOT's idea is that what makes me irresistible is my book learning. It impresses the pants off them she says. She knows enough to flatter a man, with her ironic smile. Because, of course, no man is irresistible except a fictional monster. C.-L., for example, easily resisted. I started kissing her on the mouth after her sister's coming-out party, when we both had had quite a lot of champagne. She said, abruptly sober, that she didn't want me to do that. I didn't persist, and we remained friends.

But The Girl was impressed, that's true. I explained to her why *mongénéral's* winter press conference, which we viewed on her TV, was masterful theater, and she paid respectful attention to my words, rubbing my back. In the winter she made hot cider. She would chafe and rub me. She purred and grunted when I returned the favor. I was, she told me, only her second lover. The concierge shut off the heat at midnight. We slept skin to skin, curled up under the blankets, close as two spoons in a drawer. The Girl took these things very seriously. I would catch her inspecting me for marks. Her tricks, her talk, her tears were a nuisance. I wished that she would never talk. She talked endlessly, about her place of employment, her intolerable boss, amorous complications among fellow workers whose names I could never remember from one report to the next. *Ay-coute!* she pleaded.

She liked to go out, to get dressed and be seen. Together we assisted at the July 14 parade on the Champs-Elysées. First there was the roaring fly-past of Mirage fighter-bombers, then the marching units of the various services, including the crowd-pleasing Foreign Legion, mostly Germans. The crowd waved little tricolors. At dusk there was dancing in some of the streets. This complicated traffic. I had C.-L.'s Peugeot that week and had driven over to the Right Bank to see the parade, on the way to driving to a northeast suburb to have supper with The Girl's best girlfriend.

This girlfriend, married, with an infant, lived with her domesticated husband in a new flat in a housing development for young married people. Their kid slopped at the table along with the grown-ups. On Bastille Day it came in for a bit of admiration and envious adoration from The Girl. She announced that she would stop smoking when she got pregnant, but not before, because she did not care to put on weight. I sat and listened to this. The food was heavy. The minutes of my life ticked by. I felt baffled and old. The flat was invaded by cooking odors from other flats. It was hot and lacked ventilation. Yet I stayed to the bitter end. "*Comme tu es gentil ce soir!*" The Girl

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said to me when we finally reached the parking lot again.

Backing the Peugeot without looking in the mirror, I touched the fender of a passing car, a little Citroën. The driver descended from his vehicle. He began on a sarcastic note. *"Tu t'amuses, mon pote?"* A small Frenchman in a black leatherette jacket, he had a Gauloise nailed to his lower lip. He was probably a janitor in the housing development. I had put a nick in the fender of his 2CV. When I told him I was desolated but that the damage appeared not serious, he put his face up close to mine and promised to call the police, which would put an end to my insolence. He smelled of nicotine and wine. And by the way, he asked: was I a French citizen? The Girl watched through the back window of the Peugeot. The Frog's kitchenware car blocked the path. I asked him kindly please to move it. Instead he began ceremoniously to write down the license number of C.-L.'s car. I snatched the pencil from his hand. *"Jeune salaud!"* he said. Attempting to retrieve his pencil, he pushed me, and before I knew it I had hit him with a closed fist and he fell to the pavement. He picked himself up and scurried to his car. He would now certainly bring the police in, let me just wait and see. I drove to Paris at top speed. The Girl was silent. I parked the Peugeot on the sidewalk. I was twitching and shaking with adrenalin and my hand was beginning to ache. In the old, creaky *ascenseur* of her apartment building, The Girl touched me and smiled. That night, she came forever.

The more congested a woman's face becomes the more distant she gets. She concentrates. For the time being, for as long as it lasts, her face is the face of an idiot child or (I suppose) a wounded man dying in great pain. Is that so? Margot said. *All* women? But she was interested in this. It is one thing she has never observed. She questioned me matter-of-factly about it, as if not very curious. It came out that she wished me to compare. Her training is in a comparative method, where there is a normal, healthy range, and outside that, morbid. My *affaire* with The Girl she judged as tending toward disease as it was prolonged. She smiled, pitying me, as she got the details, and sometimes she laughed, making me laugh too.

She laughs, in fact, a lot. She giggles over the phone while gossiping with her female friends in machine-gun French (women speak faster than men), and laughs appreciatively at her own mimicry. Imitating the Chief of Pathology, she struck an unsteady pose, standing on the mattress over me, chin tucked down, hand on her chest as if inserted in a Napoleonic vest. Her hips were bigger around than her bust, with inert fat deposits. She has the body of a normal adult woman, which, looked at in the light, makes you think of gravity.

"They're all the same in the dark," my friend assured me as many as ten years ago, when we were college boys. This has not proven strictly true. Deprived of The Girl's body, I began to experience stomach aches, and in Paris of all places it happened to me that to chew food and swallow it was an effort. Briefly I went with the Americans who take the courses in French Civilization at the Sorbonne. I did it purposefully, hating their language, displeased by the feel and smell of their skin, their cold, perspiring extremities. I despised them for being numb and easy and not even seeming to realize what I thought of them. I gave up and learned what it is like to be alone in a European city in the winter.

The clammy chill is impossible to escape unless you have central heating, stay all day next to the stove in a café, or share your bed with a warm body. Unable to sleep soundly under three blankets, weak in judgment, I went to the pool. The water there was green, the fairies loitered. I caught a fever and was confined to bed for ten days. The concierge kindly brought hot soup on a tray, together with the newspapers. I read them, shivering. The floor around my bed became littered with newspapers and orange peels. *"Bataille Féroce à Hué,"* the headlines of the tabloids said. *"A Hué, C'est l'Enfer."* I used to wake from nightmares in the afternoon.

WHEN the fever broke, I installed myself in a neighborhood café, a large, clean place where the local teen-agers would come after school to play the pinball machines, but which was in no sense rowdy. I made this my headquarters and arranged for a regular place near the stove. Physically weak, I would practice sitting quite still watching and listening to the activity of the establishment at its various tempos. One day I stopped reading the newspapers. For the rest of the winter I would spend eight to ten hours daily in that café, reading, as if for the first time, some of the books I had read in college without understanding at all. I used the excellent American lending library nearby. I had the impression of profound, unprecedented understanding now, not as if I had resumed my education, but as if I were starting it.

I read several books of Freud, carefully, as if being offered a revelation. I read *Ulysses* complete. I made rapid strides. I read with new comprehension, but probably with even more sympathy than discrimination, wishing to be appealed to directly by dead writers.

> Marrying, founding a family, accepting all the children that come, supporting them in this insecure world and even guiding them a little as well, is, I am convinced, the utmost a human being can succeed in doing. That seemingly so many have succeeded in this is no evidence to the contrary, for, first, there are not many who do, in fact, succeed, and secondly, these few usually don't "do" it, it merely "happens" to

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them; although this is not that Utmost, yet it is still very great and very honorable (particularly since "doing" and "happening" cannot be kept clearly distinct). And finally, it is not a matter of this Utmost, anyway, but only of some distant but decent approximation; it is, after all, not necessary to fly right into the middle of the sun, but it is necessary to crawl to a clean little spot on the earth where the sun sometimes shines and one can warm oneself a little.*

In the steam room of the New York "Y," where it is good and hot and I am dripping the book-dust out of my pores, I remember that these pathetic words seemed to make sense to me.

I finally got to James in late March. I had gained back most of the weight I had lost, and the weather had improved sufficiently that I could sit in the sun, warmly bundled, in the Esplanade des Invalides where the pensioners play at *boules*. I read *The Ambassadors* there, and then Leon Edel's biography of James (the American Library carries a wide selection of books by and about James on its shelves). It surprised me that I could not only read *The Ambassadors,* but that I got pleasure from following the tiny epiphanies of poor Strether's consciousness as Paris tempts and teaches him.

Now my strength revived. I walked to all my tutoring jobs and back. It was at about this time, too, that I became acquainted with a Frenchman my age, who made me think that if I were a woman I might be attracted to him. He was not handsome, or ugly. He was the manager of a record store, lived in an attic studio (formerly a maid's room) in a bourgeois district, and went to school at night. I think he was a P.C. voter. He had no political posters hanging in his atelier, just cheap reproductions of well-known pictures by Picasso, Pissarro, Cézanne. His luxury was *le folklore américain,* and his prize a complete collection of Bessie Smith. When I was still in college, he had spent two years in an Army stockade rather than go to Algeria. He was cynical about most things but as far as I could tell he did not think he was superior to anybody. He also had a sense of humor. He showed me the republican motto on French coins—*"Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité."*

This was in May 1968. We were visiting the Latin Quarter with some other people including the woman who turned out to be Margot and that motto seemed to have some meaning. Red and black flags flew over the courtyard of the Sorbonne. There were middle-class students and professors, and, from other parts of town, garage mechanics, tough molls, and motorcycle girls. They looked like the daguerreotypes of the mobs who are said to have tried to burn the Louvre in 1871 and were cut down by the Army which came in from Versailles.

It was a sunny spring in Paris. It had been, in some respects, a bad winter for me. The excitement and change of seasons made me feel good and I told my Communist friend it looked like another French Revolution. There's never been a French Revolution, he said, so how can there be another one? We were sitting in a café on the Boulevard St.-Michel; the leaves were out, the sidewalks alive, the walls full of slogans. He showed me and Margot a coin that the waiter had left on the little brown dish for change and tips—a coin from the Occupation, minted in the year we both were born (the woman was older, she was born before the war). This Vichy currency still turns up. *"Patrie, Famille, Travail,"* it says. Here was a motto, my friend remarked, which might not be very inspiring but was psychologically right to the point.

But aren't the auto workers, the TV newscasters, the garbage collectors, all out on strike, marching together, arm in arm with the students? I protested.

This is true, he said.

A couple of weeks later it was over except for the books that were going to be published about it. Or so it seemed to those who had wanted to believe that a few exciting days in springtime meant a change for the better in their lives. They were disappointed when the government easily won the special national election in June. Not my Communist friend. Paris makes trouble, and the rest of France puts things right again, he said. Anyway the Renault workers had come out of it with higher wages and longer vacations, which was nothing to sneer at if you were an auto worker, so maybe it was not a complete flop, even if it was not a revolution. He was neither hopeful, nor shattered. He smiled, and looked like he would endure a long time. His toughness and seriousness were very attractive.

IV

Although William James met Freud at a psychological congress at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1909, Henry James probably never encountered the words "repression" and "sublimation" in their "modern" usage—he died in 1916. Yet he left a kind of proof that Freud's patients, with their pseudonyms, were not imaginary persons. Just a few decades later, the Americans in Europe who were James's favorite characters became Freud's actual patients. This is not to suggest that James was a pathologist, any more than that Freud treated psychopaths. Both did their work on disorders of a relatively mild nature, the victims of which could still function socially with their grotesque fears and "compensations."

Both also had beards. At least, James had for most of his life. At the beginning of 1900 (to mark the turn of the century) he shaved himself clean. Until then, as the portrait by Sargent

* Franz Kafka, *Brief an den Vater* (Letter to His Father).

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attests, he had borne a resemblance to what Freud, twenty years his junior, would look like in photographs at a similar age. Both men had beards carefully-trimmed to the same shape, and a high, wide brow. James's skull was definitely more square, somewhat less long, than Freud's. This was brought out when he shaved his beard.

Both, also, had an old-fashioned life's work. Though James would never have thought of going to Freud, the younger man could have recognized in the American's opus a familiar and admirable devotion to work. The collected edition of James comes to thirty-five volumes, and once he confided to his Notebook, "When I am really at work, I'm happy, I feel strong, I see many opportunities ahead. It is the only thing that makes life endurable."

If it weren't too late for that, the technical terminology might be applied here. An artist, a grown-up man, confesses to himself that his life is unhappy; at the same time he says he is grateful for work, which does make life worth living, so to speak. Is he really convinced of this? Is he trying to persuade himself? How much does he really know about himself? What of his childhood? He produces an astonishing number of imaginative "tales" and explanatory "prefaces." Without his intending them to (consciously he values his privacy greatly), these subtly reveal to alert readers the artist and man behind the guise of the narrator and critic. His anxiety; his loneliness: his regrets. In short, the "truth" about the man.

IT SEEMS to me as I sit quietly in the locker room of the YM-YWHA in New York, the after-sweat subsiding, my head clearing in the cool air, that the great question is whether adulthood is possible. Malraux, whose best-selling reminiscences I skimmed in *Paris-Match*, says he asked a priest, a fellow member of the Resistance, what hearing confession had taught him. The man of God replied, *"D'abord, les gens sont beaucoup plus malheureux qu'on ne croit. Et puis, le fond de tout, c'est qu'il n'y a pas de grandes personnes."** According to Malraux, this priest was later killed in a battle with the Germans. Whether or not the story is made up, it strikes me that what the priest supposedly said might be the truth. It coincides with the findings of the early part of the century.

Henry James, a thirty-nine-year-old bachelor, is visiting the U.S. in 1882. His mother dies. Her death makes his American visit, not a happy one to begin with, memorably painful. Until late in life, James does not command the respect or popularity in Boston (where his parents and brother live) that he does in London. Being a man and artist who needs praise, and easy access to society, this bothers him. In addition, or as a consequence, when he leaves Boston in 1882 to travel to New York, and then Washington, he takes a dislike to the American scene. It appears to him tawdry, violent, materialistic, altogether too changeable. During his stay in Washington with Henry Adams, James receives a telegram informing him of his mother's serious condition. He boards the first train north but on arriving in Cambridge finds, to his shock, that she has already died.

While helping to arrange the funeral, and winding up his personal business (he has decided to live permanently in Europe), James puts up in a Boston rooming house. He returns each night and writes in his notebook by the light of a flickering lamp. It is at this period that he conceives *The Bostonians*. The characters and scheme of the novel emerge in various entries that are interspersed with James's thoughts on his late parent. "She was our life, she was the house, she was the keystone of the arch," he writes. "She held us together, and without her we are scattered reeds." His note on the redemptive power of work dates from this time.

I am putting on my jockey shorts.

It is twenty-one years before James comes back to America. Between 1883 and 1904 he publishes twenty-eight books, all of them set in Europe, including *The Ambassadors, The Wings of the Dove,* and *The Golden Bowl.* Returning at age sixty-one, he travels from coast to coast, and his impressions are more favorable, his memory of the trip happier. *The American Scene,* the book resulting from this visit, conveys affection, even a very idiosyncratic patriotism, though the country it describes is hardly recognizable to one who grew up before the Civil War and cherishes boyhood memories.

James returns to England again. He lives and works there for another ten years. Just before dying, he becomes a British subject. Impulsively, conscientiously, old James rallies to his adopted home and "civilization" at a moment when he is sure they are both being menaced, and his native country is giving every sign of not wishing to get involved. However, he is also strangely moved by memories of his only other firsthand experience of the beginning of a war. These go back more than fifty years to the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter.

In 1861, young men, including two of James's brothers, marched off in the temporary exultation marking the outbreak of a declared war. But young Henry did not enlist, nor was he conscripted. Helping to put out a house fire in Newport, he received an injury which made him unfit for military service. In his autobiography James refers to "a horrid even if an obscure hurt." He was unable to observe at close range the most important event in America during his lifetime,

* "First of all, people are much more unhappy than one thinks. And then, the fundamental fact is that there's no such thing as a grown-up person." André Malraux, *Anti-mémoires.*

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and could not take part in the great and terrible struggle that he would always believe had brought out some of the best qualities of his countrymen. He believes this although he cannot be further from a militarist or jingoist (the Hearst-inspired war on Spain disgusted him). He believes it, too, although he has always been sure that one of the consequences of the Civil War was the ascendancy of a new, brutally competitive spirit in America, that eclipsed what he likes to remember as a more attractive, decent pre-war spirit. Yet the war itself —the tales of self-sacrifice and chivalry amid the gore that he was spared, and especially the first exciting days—retains for him a vivid, exciting quality associated with youth. In the first two years of the First World War (which is as long as he lives), James speaks and writes of these long-ago days. He takes British citizenship, follows the military situation on the Continent closely, visits wounded soldiers in hospitals like Whitman, and waxes indignant at the Germans for shelling cathedrals. When Wilson fails to ask Congress for a declaration of war following the sinking of the *Lusitania,* James characterizes the American President in French as *louche* (shifty).

It strikes me as I am putting on my socks that a case could once have been made for a life-long guilt, or sense of inadequacy, on the part of Henry James, connected with his experience (or non-experience) of the Civil War, and a life-long curiosity and admiration on his part for the man who has experienced war, this being transmuted and partially overcome in several of the early short stories, and especially *The Bostonians.*

BASIL Ransom, who knows what he wants and goes out and gets it, is a rare male character for James. Most of James's other fictional heroes are heroines. Although he reads a book now and then (Tocqueville, Carlyle, and very tendentiously at that), and indulges in gloomy generalizations concerning America, Ransom is essentially a man of action and not a spectator. The fact that he has been a soldier, has run risks and undergone "masculine" hardships, gives him an edge over the other characters in *The Bostonians*—both the women and the womanized men. It gives him an advantage in his war with Olive and his courtship of Verena, because for all his strange romantic notions, not only does Ransom know something true and fundamental which the others don't, but he acts in assertion of a force that is too much for Olive's sickly perverseness to cope with, and that Verena, half-joyfully, half in tears, must eventally surrender to. James, who may never have slept with anybody, may not have been fully aware of a component of the force that Ransom asserts and expresses; yet if anything James's euphemisms heighten, for the modern reader, a sense of the itchy passion in the fight between Ransom and Olive.

I am thinking as I am buttoning my shirt that actually the language in *The Bostonians* is not as strange, given James the man and artist and the sensibilities of his Victorian audience, as is the hostile, almost fearful feeling that the author directs against his creature, doomed from the beginning to lose her fight anyway. In opposing Ransom, Olive is not only at a disadvantage in terms of experience, but she is defying "natural" laws that society has ratified in customs with the force of morality. In her pitiful life-denying way, she is a rebel. Would James in another, perhaps a European context, in his more mature work, have judged her with such harshness and made cruel fun of her spinsterish vocation, leaving the reader to figure out her "psychology"? James seems to have suspected that he ought to pity her, but he doesn't convincingly do it, even after he humiliates her. The modern reader wonders if James did not have some motives that he was not aware of.

Had the narrator in *The Bostonians* really been cool and detached, would not Olive Chancellor have come through from the beginning as a pathetic young woman, lacking insight, her nerves all on the surface of her thin skin, a pure, icebound spirit? She becomes caught up in the agitation and hurly-burly of the new technology of "communication" and mass-meetings, and must inevitably be shattered. This is a person to be pitied, not feared. On the other hand, if she were recognizably pitiful from the beginning, it would diminish the tension and interest of the plot. She must be not only unsympathetic, but dangerous. There must seem to be a real question whom Verena will choose to live with—and if she chooses Olive, that would be a bad defeat not only for nature, but morality. James humiliates her as a moralistic, even if slightly ironical, God might. He affects a quasi-divine distance. But that is only apparent. "The artist is present in every page of every book from which he sought so assiduously to eliminate himself," James admitted in his Notebook. Is this not also true when the artist is writing automatically, as it were, for no one's edification but his own, as James did in Boston after his mother died?

> It was the perfect mother's life—the life of a perfect wife. To bring her children into the world—to expend herself, for years, for their happiness and welfare—then, when they had reached a full maturity and were absorbed in the world and their own interests—to lay herself down in her ebbing strength and yield up her pure soul to the celestial power that had given her this divine commission.*

Freud discovered that self-sacrifice of the sort the bereaved James apostrophized was never "pure" but always implied feelings of mutual resentment and hostility. It is generally agreed

* Matthiessen and Murdock, eds., *The Notebooks of Henry James.*

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today that these psychological disorders used to be reproduced from generation to generation thanks to the customary rigid assignment, in certain social classes, of "roles" to women and men. The duties of females tended to make them even more readily idealized, worshiped, and feared by sensitive males. Developments in Western Europe and America were going in a direction that doomed the "roles," however. The First World War, of course, was the great turning-point. Even in the last false years before the invasion of Belgium, there were small indications of what was in store. For example, the Sargent portrait of James, with its noble bald male head and its beard, was slashed by suffragettes during a demonstration in a London museum. On this occasion the vandalism was carried out at random. There is no evidence that the women were aware that the man in the painting was the author of a novel called *The Bostonians*. Nevertheless the coincidence (it seems to me, as I am putting on my trousers) is freighted with irony and historical portent.

EVEN before the war broke out James suspected that the "civilization" he had depended on was mostly in the past. He was pretty certain, however, that his books would be read one day with more understanding and pleasure than they had been, and he continued to work and publish steadily. He rebuked his ever-pessimistic correspondent, Henry Adams, for seeming to equate personal old age with the collapse of the world.

> My dear Henry, I have your melancholy outpouring of the 7th, and I know not how better to acknowledge it than by the full recognition of its unmitigated blackness. *Of course* we are lone survivors, of course the past that was our lives is at the bottom of an abyss—if the abyss has any bottom.*

James continued to be "interested" enough in his memories to work on his autobiography, as well as on *The Sense of the Past*. These books were never finished because the war broke out, causing James, for the first time, to interrupt, and then give up, his work.

The war seems to have come as a terrible shock. Using an image he had employed on Adams earlier, James called it a "plunge of civilization into this abyss of blood and darkness." Unable to do his work because of the news in August 1914, he wrote in a letter,

> The country and the season here are of a beauty of peace, and loveliness of light, and summer grace, that make it inconceivable that just across the Channel, blue as *paint* today, the fields of France and Belgium are being, or about to be, given up to unthinkable massacre and misery.

He is increasingly liable to attacks of angina brought on by emotional upset, and tells of having to take his nitroglycerin tablets in the street to ease the pain (today amyl nitrite is prescribed as a vasodilator; it is also obtained by healthy young people and sniffed to enhance the pleasure of orgasm). Henry James leans against a railing in the Bayswater Road in January 1915, "under the extremity of an attack of angina pectoris" brought on by a failure to find a cab in wartime London. Whatever women there are in this cityscape, whatever their occupation and social class, they hobble along in dresses that reach down to their ankles. The American recovers from this attack. In March he is writing to his former valet who has joined the army:

> The jolly plucky spirit of your letters gives me the greatest pleasure, and makes me feel that you are seeing life indeed. It is an immense adventure, truly, and one in which, if things go well with you, as I so heartily hope they will, you will always be glad and proud to have played your part. Play it up to the very notch and take all the interest in it you possibly can. I like immensely your telling me how you hold out in marches, under whatever drawbacks, when longer legs have to fall out: this does you the greatest honor. What a lot you must be seeing, feeling and above all hearing—with that terrific artillery always in your ears!

Henry James subscribes to the Allied war effort wholeheartedly. He writes a propaganda pamphlet, "The American Volunteer Motor-Ambulances in France," which is widely distributed. Young men from America heed the call. John Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings, and Ernest Hemingway become ambulance drivers, and produce books inspired by their war experiences that destroy and bury forever James's nauseous style and fine idealism. The "shit-detector" is patented. A system of hard, unillusioned insights becomes *répandue: "La vérité d'un homme, c'est d'abord ce qu'il cache."* †The meanness and stupidity of that vision is apparent to me as I am doing up my shoelaces. As if a man consisted of the sum of the secrets he keeps from himself!

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* In Leon Edel, ed., *Selected Letters of Henry James*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1955.

† The truth about a man lies first and foremost in what he hides." Malraux, *Antimémoires*.

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Does IQ Matter?

David K. Cohen

THE last four or five years have not exactly been years of glory for American liberals. Some of the reasons for this—like the war or the President—are ephemeral. At least one other, however—the depressing performance of recent liberal social programs—probably is not. The poor record of the social legislation of the 60's has seriously shaken confidence in traditional liberal reform strategies, and since education has always occupied a favored role in those strategies, it has come in for a good share of the questioning. The apparent failure of programs like Headstart has raised doubts as to whether investment in education for the poor will promote equality.

Most commentators have responded to this development in a characteristically American fashion. The failure of earlier programs has been attributed to inadequate resources, indifferent professionals, or intractable bureaucracies. Reform can proceed, we are told, only when more money is spent, or when educational institutions are made more responsive, or when the professions are made more accountable. In response to apparent failure a whole new generation of optimistic proposals has sprung up.

A few critics of Great Society programs, however, have been less hopeful. Some ask whether education is in fact the mechanism by which the distribution of wealth, power, or status has been affected in America. If schooling has not promoted equality among whites, after all, it would be a little silly to expect it to do so for blacks. Others have asserted that the failure of educational programs owes more to the deficiencies of poor children than to the defects of their schools. If the sources of school failure among the poor are either habits of mind imposed by culture or intellectual barriers imposed by heredity, they argue, it hardly makes sense to spend money on school-improvement programs that rest on contrary assumptions.

Each of these two major lines of thought raises serious questions about received liberal doctrine, because each suggests that institutions or individuals are not as malleable as we have hitherto assumed. But there has been greater fascination with the question of deficiencies in the poor than with the possible limits of schooling as an equalizing strategy. A few years ago, in an essay in the *Harvard Educational Review*, Arthur Jensen reviewed the evidence on group differences in intellectual ability and school achievement; everything showed large and consistent gaps among groups. On the average, children whose families were poor or black did much less well on tests than children whose families were well-to-do, or white. Jensen also pulled together a considerable body of research which suggested that differences in intelligence among individuals seemed to be caused more by heredity than by environment. And finally he ventured the idea that heredity may explain intellectual differences among groups as well as it appears to account for differences among individuals.

More recently H. J. Eysenck, a British psychologist, brought out a book which purported to subject Jensen's work to a critical assessment.* Although there is little indication of such assessment in this pot-boiler, it does support Jensen's appraisal of the research, as well as his speculation concerning the genetic sources of racial differences in IQ. Finally, a few months ago Richard J. Herrnstein, a Harvard psychologist, published an essay in the *Atlantic Monthly* which generated quite a stir. Herrnstein broadened, refined, and defended arguments laid down earlier. He maintained that what IQ tests measure is an important and stable human attribute. He marshaled evidence that IQ differences among individuals are mostly accounted for by genes, not by environment. And he pressed the idea that intelligence is an increasingly powerful influence on the allocation of status, wealth, and power in advanced industrial societies. Although Herrnstein did point out the difficulty of generalizing from individual to group differences, his essay questioned the traditional liberal idea that stupidity results from the inheritance of poverty, contending instead that poverty results from the inheritance of stupidity.

These arguments, of course, are nothing new.

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* *The IQ Argument*, The Library Press, 156 pp. $5.95.

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The heritability of IQ first became a major public fixation in reaction to the turn-of-the century deluge of poor European immigrants. It bubbled to the surface once again just after the *Brown* decision in 1954, when racial mixing in public schools seemed to loom on the horizon. And not surprisingly it reemerged when the disappointing results of recent school-improvement programs for the poor became known. As this little chronicle may suggest, recent attention to the subject is not wholly the product of scientific interest. While the heritability of IQ holds a constant fascination for psychologists and demographers, most of the time they are the only people who care enough about the matter even to mention it. Only when there are broader issues involving ethnic or racial minorities—in which the character of the culture, or the allocation of public resources, or the composition of society is at stake—does the relationship between genes and IQ reach the front page of anything other than arcane professional journals.

But while this may help us understand the recent interest in the IQ question as a social phenomenon, it doesn't say much about the arguments themselves. *Does* heredity account for most individual differences in IQ? Does it account for class and racial differences in IQ? Is IQ really a good measure of intelligence, or a good predictor of the things that make for success in America?

Of all these issues, the role of heredity in making for differences in individual IQ has been the most thoroughly probed. One way of approaching it has been to compare the intelligences of identical twins who have been raised in different environments. Since identical twins have the same genetic endowment in all respects, any difference in their IQ's that are not due to errors in measurement would presumably be traceable to differences in environment. In general, studies show that only about 20 or 30 per cent of the variation in the IQ's of twins can be attributed to variations in their environment—the rest is presumably due to heredity.

Another approach has been to compare the intelligence of unrelated children reared together. Since their genetic material can safely be assumed to have nothing in common, any relationship between their IQ's would probably be the result of environmental similarity. Studies of this kind have yielded roughly the same results as the research on twins—namely, that only about 20 or 30 per cent of the variation in IQ is attributable to environment.

This evidence is nothing to sneeze at, but it might easily be misinterpreted. For one thing, genes and environment may interact in ways which would lead to overestimates of genetic influence: a child with a low IQ will probably be treated accordingly, while a brighter child would get more stimulation. This could easily enhance the bright child's IQ while depressing the dull child's even further; in studies of the sort summarized here, such effects, which are really environmental, would all be marked down to heredity. The magnitude of effects like these has never been estimated, nor is it clear that it could be.

Another problem with the twin studies has to do with the distribution of environments. Identical twins reared apart are nearly as rare as hen's teeth, and constriction in the range of their environments might overstate the importance of heredity. However, while the environments studied do not fully cover the available extremes in the U.S. or Britain, the range was still pretty considerable. That is, in at least a few cases one twin was sent to Scarsdale to grow up, and the other to Hoboken.

But let us suppose that instead of going to Scarsdale one twin had been placed in some sort of super-enriched environment, absolutely booming and buzzing with the varieties of stimulation that psychologists regard as brain food. We don't know very much about the effects of changing the intensity of environments or of reversing inequalities in their distribution. The few small experiments that have been conducted here and there around the country suggest that certain varieties of stimulation do produce considerable IQ gains in disadvantaged children. Some of them, in fact, have produced gains of roughly the same magnitude as the gap which on the average separates the IQ of blacks and whites. These programs have involved either highly structured pre-schools or home-visiting programs designed to improve effectiveness of parents as teachers. They generally last about nine months or a year. In one experiment now under way in Milwaukee, however, children from poor families have been exposed to far more intense stimulation than usual. Instead of being visited by a teacher once a week, or being placed in a highly structured preschool in the mornings, children and their families are absolutely bombarded with environmental stimuli. The initial results show quite phenomenal IQ gains—often on the order of thirty or forty points. It is much too soon to tell whether the gains will last. Evidence from other experiments indicates that as the experience recedes into the past so does its effect diminish. Three or four years after most such experiments end, researchers find that the gains have by and large vanished. No one knows what would happen if the experiments were more intense, or if they lasted for nine years instead of nine months. And for the immediate future, at least, these questions will remain unanswered.

One important point about all these studies, then, is that they show the malleability of IQ. But another is that the results are still compatible

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with the general pattern of findings on the relative influence of heredity and environment on IQ. Thus, to say (by way of example) that genes seem to account for 80 per cent of the variation among the IQ's of individuals is not necessarily to say that only 20 per cent of anyone's IQ is malleable. No one knows whether there is a "ceiling" on environmental effects or not, or what it might be.

All of this should be enough to persuade any sensible reader that the issue will never be resolved in the pages of COMMENTARY. Indeed, it would be astonishing if people ever stopped arguing about the relative influence of heredity and environment on individual IQ differences. Hereditarians will always point to evidence which shows that (things being what they are) more of the variability in IQ is explained by heredity, and environmentalists will always be able to point to evidence which encourages the belief that if environments were radically altered, IQ's might be sharply changed. Since these phenomena are not mutually exclusive, and since experiments to test the limits of environmental effects are unlikely to be devised, the argument will probably continue for the next thirty years in much the same terms as it has for the last thirty.

The question of chief interest, of course, is not that of individual but of group differences. The sources of such differences, however, are not nearly so well illuminated by research. That there is a substantial gap in test scores between the races seems clear. What people want to know is whether the gap is a result of differences in heredity or environment, but the answer is hard to get at. The same conditions which make for interest in the question—the existence of large differences in both measured ability and social achievement—make it very difficult to decide where cause ends and effect begins. It is hard to figure out whether poverty causes low IQ or low IQ causes poverty, because they tend to occur in the same persons. The very people who are continually suspected of being genetically underendowed with respect to IQ have also been socially underendowed with respect to environment. This means, for example, that the full range of environmental differences that characterized native Wasps in the 1920's did not characterize immigrant Italians, and as a result it would have been well-nigh impossible to find comparable samples of Italians and Wasps on whom to conduct research.

The same holds for blacks and whites today. One can investigate the relative influence of heredity and environment among blacks, just as in the studies of white children summarized earlier. But such studies of black children would only tell us how much of the IQ variation among blacks themselves is due to heredity; they would not tell us how much of the gap in test scores *between* the races is due to heredity and how much to environment. We can imagine ways to get around this problem: study unrelated black and white children who were raised in the same home; or study a population of black and white adults who have had the same environments; or (as one wag has suggested) find several pairs of identical twins who have been reared apart and each pair of whom consists of one white and one black twin. But simply listing the examples reveals the problem: securing blacks and whites with the same environments is only a little easier than securing blacks and whites with the same natural parents. The environmental differences America has created between blacks and whites are profound and ancient, and they can be expected to endure for some time. Until such differences have become a thing of the past for at least some blacks, it is hard to see how respectable research can be done on the sources of the racial IQ gap. It is likely, however, that by the time such social equality is attained, either the environmentalists will be proved right by the disappearance of the IQ gap, or the very fact of social equality will cause everyone to lose interest in the question. Who now cares whether Italians have lower or higher IQ's than native white Americans?

ODDLY ENOUGH, in most of the arguments about genes and IQ over the past thirty years much greater attention has been paid to the question of the relative importance of circumstances and heredity than to figuring out exactly what IQ means, or what it is good for. Most people with very high IQ's seem very smart, and most people with very low IQ's seem very stupid. But people in between—which is where almost everyone *is*—are full of surprises. The fact that the tests can distinguish extremes so evident in everyday life inclines one to believe they measure something important. The fact that things get unclear in the middle, however, should make one dubious as to the value of the measuring-stick for most of everyday life.

What do IQ tests measure? Some people naively believe they provide a summary index of a general human ability to cope, but this would appear unlikely: think of the psychologist next door who nearly became unhinged trying to put together a hi-fi kit, or of the university sociologists who lost their shirts running a consulting firm, or of the brilliant computer freak who is incapable of writing an intelligible English sentence.

There are psychologists who believe that IQ tests measure one dimension of some more general and unified underlying intelligence. Perhaps, but at the moment it is hard to know. Psychologists are not in agreement on the elements of this underlying intelligence, and available research shows that sometimes the elements in question are connected only weakly or not at all. In fact, IQ is about the only thing psychologists

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have learned to measure with much validity or consistency, and as a result good research on the relation between IQ and other aspects of intelligence or personality is not plentiful.

Finally, there are people who think that intelligence is simply the ability to perform well at whatever one's social situation seems to require. This is obviously true in some ways, but in extreme form the notion is not really useful at all. Does it make sense to say that Lewis Strauss was smarter than Robert Oppenheimer? Or to argue that a high-school student who flunked out and then became a successful numbers runner is just as smart as the valedictorian of his high school who couldn't get a job after graduation? Intelligence may not be timeless and unitary, but pushed to the extreme the relativist view dissolves in horrible contortions.

No doubt this debate could go on forever—in fact it probably will—but most people would not wish to pursue it. They assume a social definition of intelligence; they care about not what it is as a psychological construct, but how it works as a phenomenon in society. Indeed, many of those who worry about the proper definition of IQ do so chiefly because they think it is becoming the central criterion for distributing the good things of life. People care about IQ because they regard it as the basis on which society's rewards and punishments are allocated; they believe that America is becoming a society in which status and power are now, and will increasingly be, a function of brains.

This view is so widely held that it has become a sort of secular catechism. It certainly is repeated often enough, and in many different connections. Radicals attack America for allocating rewards on the basis of technical talent rather than need or human value; liberals bemoan the fact that discrimination has kept members of minority groups from competing on their own merits; Jews fear the demise of merit standards in employment and education, and blacks attack the standards themselves as racist. Conservatives used to attack merit standards too, on the ground that some things were more important than intelligence, but the fact that this argument no longer has enough credibility to be used in defense of privilege—it is now employed only on behalf of the poor—suggests how widespread is the belief that meritocracy is upon us.

In the light of this concern, the fuss over IQ is indeed as important as Professors Eysenck and Herrnstein believe it to be. However muddy the tests or biased their results, they exist; in a meritocracy of the sort we are said to have, such tests would undoubtedly be a major criterion for the allocation of rewards. The basic question, then, is whether, and how much, IQ counts in America in terms of status and power.

Perhaps the best place to begin is the schools. Schools, after all, are where IQ is supposed to have its greatest impact, because it is in schools that children get routed on the various educational tracks which are presumed to play a considerable role in their chances for wealth and status later on. Really bright children are supposed to be routed into college preparatory work, and really not-so-bright children into vocational courses. Those in between are assigned to "general," business, or similar curricula. Then everyone graduates and goes to work, or drops out, or goes to college, and moves on to his appointed niche.

This picture is far from being wholly false, but it is by no means as true as most educators make it out to be. Take, for example, what is probably the most critical decision made during a child's school career: the kind of high-school program he will follow. In a perfectly meritocratic system based on IQ this decision would rest exclusively on test scores; in a perfect caste system it would rest exclusively on one's inherited status. In the United States things are much more confused. According to studies of curricula-assignments of high-school students, measured ability is only one among several influential factors; others include the social and economic status of a student's family, his own aspirations for a career, and the degree of encouragement his parents have offered to those aspirations. The most comprehensive studies suggest in fact that these latter three influences on placement in high school are only slightly less important than measured ability.

Of course, a good deal happens to children in school before they even reach the point where decisions are made about their high-school curriculum. They are graded and grouped from the very beginning, and all of these classification procedures undoubtedly have some impact—if not on how children regard themselves at least on what the teachers think about them. But the assignment of children to ability groups, like the assignment to curricula, seems to be determined by all sorts of things in addition to IQ. And grades too seem to be influenced as much by the attitudes of the children, their behavior toward authority, and their general demeanor as by their test scores.

But the most important point is that all of these factors together—ability, aspirations, inherited status, etc.—account for less than half of the actual variation in the assignment of students to one high-school track or another. A majority of the differences among students in this respect, in other words, are caused by something other than either status or brains. This is not as odd as it might seem. Some of the differences probably arise from mistakes in assignments—bright children who want to go to college but lose out because of a slip or who are incorrectly assigned because of a perverse teacher. Some of the differ-

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ences probably are caused by variations in the attitudes and motivation of the family, which seem to have a considerable impact on schooling decisions quite independently of parents' status or children's ability; lots of poor parents push their children very hard, and lots of non-poor parents don't. And some of the differences probably are caused by variations in deportment or motivation, or the encouragement students get from teachers, or other factors that usually go unmeasured. In short, if we consider only measured intelligence or inherited status, we cannot explain most of the variation in placement of students in high school.

WHAT is the relative importance of IQ and inherited status as far as getting into college is concerned? Here, after all, is one of the great divides in American life. A college degree is regarded increasingly as the only sure way to gain access to the good things in this society, and certainly college entrance is the goal toward which so much of the work of the schools is supposed to be aimed. How great a role does IQ play here?

If we look only at the relative influence of tested ability and inherited social and economic status, the available evidence does not show that college entrance is chiefly determined by academic ability. In fact, the relative importance of these two influences seems to be roughly equal. Consider, for example, a high-school senior whose family is in the lowest fifth of the population with respect to both social status and test scores. Not only is this young person less bright than at least 80 per cent of all high-school seniors, but his family is less affluent than at least 80 per cent of American families. In the early 1960's, he had roughly one chance in ten of entering college the year after high-school graduation.

By way of contrast consider his friend down the street, similarly situated with respect to family circumstances, but in the top fifth of the ability distribution. His family is poorer than over 80 per cent of the population, but he is smarter than over 80 per cent of all high-school seniors. He had roughly six chances in ten of entering college the year after graduating high school.

A comparison of these two seniors reveals that among poor students, when family circumstances are roughly the same, more brains means a much better chance of going to college.

What about more advantaged students—do IQ and status operate in the same way? Consider two seniors who come from families in the upper fifth of the distribution of social advantages and economic status. If one of them fell in the bottom fifth of the ability distribution, he would have roughly four chances in ten of going to college. If the other fell in the top fifth of the ability distribution, he would have nine chances in ten of going to college. This comparison reveals that brains are a help at the top of the social pyramid, just as at the bottom: rich boys and girls with high IQ's go to college more often than rich boys and girls with low IQ's.

But now a comparison of the first pair of students with the second pair reveals that getting rich (moving from the bottom to the top of the social pyramid), is nearly as big a help in increasing a student's chances of going to college as getting smart (moving from the bottom to the top of the IQ distribution). More precise analyses of the data on college-going confirm the impression gained from these examples: measured intelligence is of slightly greater influence on college attendance than inherited status. This is a great deal different from a world in which going to college is wholly determined by family position, but it is far from a world in which going to college is wholly determined by intellectual ability.

Once again, however, these comparisons do not reveal what must be the most important fact—namely, that ability and status combined explain somewhat less than half the actual variation in college attendance. As in the case of curriculum placement, we must turn to other factors—motivation, luck, discrimination, chance, and family encouragement or lack of it—to find likely explanations. Existing research provides support for the idea that these other factors do play a role (although it does not afford comprehensive estimates of their relative importance).*

Thus, while academic ability or intelligence is important to educational success, other factors, measured and unmeasured, seem to have at least as much weight in determining who gets ahead in the world of American schools. But this in turn raises an absolute swarm of problems. If test scores are only moderately important, should steps be taken to increase their influence? Or would relying more heavily on test scores in order to lessen the influence of social inheritance leave less room for people to be selected on other criteria, such as motivation? If the influence of inherited status on selection ought to be reduced, how great should the reduction be? In a perfect meritocracy, after all, the objective would be to remove the effect of any social advantages parents had achieved on the life-chances of their children—but what sort of society would that be? Would it be consistent with a society of nuclear families? Does anyone want a society in which

* It could be argued that the research I have summarized understates the influence of social and economic class, because dropouts were not included in the computations; but when they were included, the results barely changed. It could be argued that the role of intelligence is understated because a single test score can't summarize intelligence; yet when scores in four different tests were included instead of just one, nothing much changed either. And while there are plenty of other difficulties with the studies summarized here, none of them seems important enough to change the general pattern of results I have presented.

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every child has an equal chance to be a clam-digger or a cardiac surgeon, subject only to IQ differences? The idea seems bizarre, for it suggests a social rat-race which would make the Great American Status Scramble look like a party game for retired schoolmarms. And if a perfect meritocracy seems like a perfect neurotic nightmare, then just how much, or how little, of an educational advantage would we want families to be able to pass along to their children?

ANYONE who thinks about these questions for more than ten seconds will realize that no easy answers are available. More equality in education would be a good thing, and it is sensible to suppose that this implies some effort to reduce the influence of social and economic inheritance on school success. But the questions reveal that we have no well-formed conception of how much the impact of families ought to be reduced, or how much of a role IQ ought to have in reducing it. Nor, indeed, is it clear that IQ should bear that burden at all. Distributing rewards in accordance with IQ scores, after all, is not the only known device for reducing social and economic differences, even in education.

Of course, one's view on these last issues will depend in part on the role one thinks intelligence actually plays in the allocation of adult status and power. If it turned out that IQ was crucial, it would be hard to maintain that it ought not to be the principal means for discriminating among school children. So before going any further with these questions about meritocracy in schools, it might be wise to find out just how important IQ is once people get out of them. I will deal with occupational status first, because that is what seems to fascinate most writers on the subject.*

One way of looking at this question—as Eysenck and Herrnstein did—is by pointing to the evidence on the average IQ's of people in different occupations. Thus, manual laborers turn out to have much lower IQ's than professors of theology, and this is assumed to mean that IQ is an entry requirement for these occupations. But simply presenting the gross differences begs all the basic questions. First, the averages don't reveal the considerable dispersion of IQ's within occupational groups, which reveals that there are lots of people in working-class jobs whose IQ's are in the same range as those in higher-status occupations, and vice versa. But more significantly, listing IQ differences among occupations only tells us that differences exist; it does not tell us how important IQ was in getting people into those occupations.

A satisfactory account would indeed require that we know the IQ's of people in different occupations, but it would require other information as well. We would need to know, for example, how far people got in school and what social and economic advantages their parents had, because these might have had a real impact on their own occupational status as adults to say nothing of their IQ's. Armed with evidence of this sort—which is hard to come by because it covers almost the entire life-cycle—we could compare the relative importance of IQ and other influences on the sorts of jobs adults wind up with. Now we do in fact have a good deal of research which shows that people who stay in school longer wind up on the average with higher status jobs, and that on the average people who begin life with more social and economic advantages wind up with more of them as adults. But when researchers try to assess the relative importance of education and social inheritance they begin to part company. Some argue that staying in school is a considerably more important influence on occupational attainment than inherited status; others find the opposite to be true. The former category of researchers also tend to think of America as a relatively open society, in which schooling serves as a vehicle of social mobility from one generation to another. Researchers in the second category tend to think of America as a relatively closed society, in which the schools mostly transmit the same status from parents to children. Since both judgments are manifestly true to some degree, and since the evidence is not entirely adequate to resolve the matter, the argument will continue for some time. But what is important for our purposes is not how much mobility there is, or to what extent schooling contributes to it; rather we want to know whether IQ has an effect on occupational status which is *independent* of these two influences.

The available evidence suggests that it does not. IQ seems to have little or no independent effect on the sorts of jobs people wind up with as adults, all other things being equal. IQ does help moderately and indirectly, because it has a moderate influence on how long people stay in school, and the length of their stay in school affects the sorts of jobs they get. But once the influence of schooling is taken into account, IQ appears to have no independent relation to occupational success. If a meritocracy is a society in which intelligent people do well regardless of their parents or their schooling, America is not such a society.

To make this concrete, consider several adults who differ in every aspect under discussion here—jobs, IQ's, length of stay in school, and social and economic backgrounds. The differences in

* Occupational status is a term derived from studies of the prestige in which Americans hold different sorts of jobs. Generally, they think that professional and managerial jobs are very prestigious and that common labor is not. Indices of occupational prestige are very highly correlated with general indices of social and economic status.

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their inherited status and in the length of time they stayed in school account for a fair proportion (somewhat less than half) of the differences in the status of their jobs. Since those who have higher IQ's will have stayed in school somewhat longer, IQ can be said to have a moderate effect on occupational status. But when people with equal amounts of schooling are considered, differences in their IQ's turn out to account for none of the differences in the status of their jobs. Having a higher IQ is no help in getting a higher status job for people who have the same educational attainment and the same social and economic background. In addition, there is an abundance of studies showing that the grades of college students are not related either to their income or to their occupational status once they get out of college; similarly, research on what differentiates good from bad workers (within broad occupational categories) shows that workers who produce more or who are rated highly by their supervisors generally do not have higher test scores, although they do tend to have "better" attitudes, greater "motivation," better "deportment"—in effect, more of the attributes which also seem to make for success in school.

THUS, the process of selection to occupations in America does not appear to be more than mildly dependent on IQ. And here too, as in the case of high-school placement and college entrance, recent research has shown that IQ, schooling, and inherited status together account for less than half of the variation in the occupational attainment of American males. More than half of the differences in the job status of American men is explained neither by their IQ, nor by how long they went to school, nor by the social and economic advantages (or burdens) they inherited. Some of these unexplained differences are undoubtedly due to errors in the ways sociologists measure things, but others are probably due to such imponderables as enterprise, motivation, the luck of the draw, and preferences unrelated either to brains or to economic background.

That, however, is not the end of the matter. Whatever the evidence may suggest about the modest influence IQ presently exerts on occupational selection, the popular mythology is that it is much greater now than it was fifty years ago. America, we are told, is a "knowledge society"; we are moving into a post-industrial age, in which talent will rule. Yet when we turn to historical evidence concerning the role of IQ in occupational selection, once again we find little support for such claims. If IQ were becoming a more important force in occupational selection we would expect the IQ averages of people in any occupation to have become more similar over time: the IQ's of professional people should have grown more nearly equal as merit selection proceeded, and the same would be true of blue-collar workers. But the fragmentary evidence we have suggests this is not true: the dispersion of IQ's within occupational categories for native American whites seems to have remained pretty stable over the last four or five decades. Similarly, if IQ were becoming more important we might expect the intellectual level of intellectually demanding occupations to rise, and the level of undemanding jobs to fall. But no such development seems to have taken place. Finally, if IQ were becoming more important to adult success, we would imagine that the main instrument by which IQ makes itself felt in America—schooling—would have become more important to getting a job. But according to the historical evidence concerning the effect of schooling on occupational attainment over the past four or five decades, education seems to bear no more powerful relationship to the job one gets today than it did earlier in the century.

Now all of this evidence is partial, and subject to a variety of caveats. But the striking thing is that nowhere can we find any empirical support for the idea that brains are becoming increasingly more important to status in America. Of course, this by itself is not incompatible with the observation that "knowledge" is an increasingly central aspect of life. For one thing, measures of occupational status are based on opinion surveys in which random samples of the American people are asked about the relative prestige of occupations. Thus, the "importance" of intellectual work would appear to change only if people thought its prestige was changing. But in general public attitudes toward the relative prestige of various occupations have changed very little over time, so that paradoxically intellectual work may in fact be becoming more important even though this is not reflected in the measures used by sociologists. No one has ever actually set out to measure how much more important technological and scientific work is now than in 1920, and probably no one ever will.

But even if we assume that brains *are* becoming more important or powerful (a moot point in my view), other things are changing as well. Fifty years ago most Americans never finished high school, and only a tiny percentage went on to college. Now almost everyone finishes high school, and more than one third go on to some form of post-secondary education. This means that lots of ordinary people who would never have had the chance fifty years ago to be doctors or teachers or engineers, have the chance today. If brains are becoming more powerful at the same time as schooling becomes more universal (and thereby opens up opportunity through the power of certification), the two tendencies may cancel each other out. Of course I am speculating here, but observed evidence would tend to support this view, and to suggest also how compli-

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cated the relationship among intelligence, status, and power can be; some social forces may be acting to intensify the connection at the same time as others are weakening it.

If, then, we measure adult status by way of occupational prestige rankings, and merit by IQ, America does not appear more than mildly meritocratic. Nor is there reason to believe that IQ has grown more important to individual success during the past five or six decades. This does not mean that the symbols of learning—or its apparatus—have not become more important. Indeed, it is clear that the length of time one stays in school is more relevant to occupational attainment than is raw IQ. Rather than a social hierarchy based on intellect, we may be creating a "school-ocracy." But the importance of schooling to occupational status may itself be based on a variety of non-intellectual factors. Employers use the school system as an elaborate behavior-screening mechanism, on the theory that certain kinds of work require certain kinds of personalities. This would explain why schools place so much stress on deportment, and why they screen out youngsters who have a hard time sitting still for long periods of time, or who don't have the right appearance; these tend to get tracked to lower-status school work and to lower-status jobs. Students who have "better" manners, who behave "properly," who accept authority, and who look the way they should, tend to be routed into higher-status school work and occupations. This screening system may or may not accord with the actual behavior which is required in various sorts of occupations, but it does seem to fit what people *think* is appropriate behavior.

Another cause of the connection between schooling and adult success may be that schools are becoming the principal vehicle for "professionalizing" occupations. Especially in the marginal and semi-marginal professions, adding educational requirements for certification and licensing is a way of enhancing the standing and respectability of a given line of work in the eyes of its practitioners and clients. It also is a way of persuading people that the occupation in question is up-to-date, modern, and in touch with the latest wisdom. And it often is a way (as with teachers, for example) of getting a bigger paycheck. But whatever the explanation, the additional educational requirements cannot be said to have much relation to job performance.

WHEN schooling becomes necessary to later occupational standing for essentially non-intellectual reasons, various unhappy consequences can result. One such consequence is the subversion of the legitimate purposes of educational institutions, and the breeding of contempt for what they do; another is the creation of an occupational selection system in which the ability to remain glued to the seat of a chair for long periods of time becomes a prime recommendation for advancement. (The ability to sit still is useful for many purposes, but especially among children it may not be related to the ingenuity, enterprise, and cleverness which any lively society would want to promote.) Under such a system of occupational selection, we are as likely to produce an unhealthy accumulation of boredom and discontent as we are to create a dangerous maldistribution of intellect.

Developments like these are the more distressing because of the greater uniformity they promise, both in what people do and in how they think about it. Such uniformity has not always characterized American society. There is fairly convincing evidence, for example, of ethnic differences in the role that schools have played in promoting occupational mobility. Studies of European ethnic groups show that during this century all of them made substantial increases in occupational status, but that they did so in rather different ways. The children of Russian immigrants (which means Jews for the most part) completed more years of school, on the average, than children from other groups. In addition, educational attainment had a much stronger relationship to the later occupational attainment of these children than it did for children from other groups—which probably means that a disproportionate number of Jews went into occupations which had substantial educational requirements. Not all nationalities had the same experience; Italian and Polish children, for example, tended to complete fewer years of school than those of some other groups. But for Italians and Poles educational differences were not in themselves an important influence as far as later occupational status was concerned.

The history of ethnic variations in the importance of schooling suggests in turn the underlying differences in the avenues that various ethnic groups have taken to achieve higher social and economic status. And these different avenues probably reflect cultural and historical differences from group to group with regard to the sorts of work which were known and esteemed in the parent country. They even may have been indicative of ethnic differences in the "talent for school," for there were very considerable IQ differences among the European immigrant groups which roughly corresponded to their success or failure in school. But the important point is that to the extent that schooling is made an unavoidable requirement for occupational entry or advancement, it may close off genuine cultural differences in occupational values, and irrationally stifle alternatives which might otherwise flourish. To the extent that success in a homogeneous system of schooling becomes the *sine qua non* of entry to occupations, cultural diversity in conceptions of success and worthy work may be diminished. It is hard to think of any good

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which could possibly come from that situation.

In a sense, however, all the attention to the relative status of occupations is misleading. It is easy to understand why intellectuals might be obsessed with the question, but it is important in the discussion of meritocracy only because of the assumption that jobs which require brains wield more power than jobs which don't. If it turned out that people with high IQ's did not really have more power than ordinary folks, there wouldn't be very much left for one to argue about.

Normally when intellectuals write about this question they bemoan the fact that people like themselves have *little* power and influence. Indeed, they have mourned this situation for so long that most Americans who read what intellectuals write probably concluded long ago that anyone who has power is either a knave or a fool. As a result, it comes as something of a surprise to hear that intellectuals are in danger of having too much power. But if holding political office, for instance, is an index of power, it is hard to see any cause for alarm, for there certainly is no evidence of an undue concentration of raw IQ among the ranks of government officials. Indeed, it is hard to imagine why anyone would think government officials should have unusually high IQ's. After all, the motives which lead men and women into public life probably have more to do with the desire for power, or money, or recognition, than with the need to exercise a restless and powerful intellect.

Politics, however, is only one of the several sources of power and influence in America; great wealth is another. Here again, it should come as no great surprise to learn that a high IQ is not the main requirement for having lots of money. People with more schooling do tend to have somewhat higher incomes, but the relationship between the two is not even as strong as the relationship between schooling and occupational status. Partly this is due to the fact that lots of jobs with rather high status—preaching, teaching, and the like—don't come with cushy salaries, and lots of jobs with rather low status, like being a plumber or a machinist, do. There also is the fact that spending decades in school is a condition of employment in most of the high-status but low-paying jobs, but not a condition of tenure in the others. And finally, doing well in school is not yet a prerequisite for inheriting money.

Then there are the other ways of attaining power, or at least influence. The people who write for newspapers and talk on television offer one example, and the "experts" who work for Congressional committees and executive agencies offer another. And university professors who spend half their lives traveling to consultations with government officials or corporate managers offer yet another. Still, one is at a loss to imagine why journalists should be either brighter or more influential than they were fifty years ago, and a modest stint of watching television would not lead anyone to conclude that the medium is in peril of being taken over by people with dangerously high IQ's. Finally, anyone who imagines that "experts" with high IQ's have a great future in public life ought to visit his nearest government agency and see how it works. Most important government business turns not on the technical skills that experts do monopolize, but on ethical and political considerations. Experts have had to relearn this lesson every few years since the Progressive era.

LET us try to summarize, in general form, the conclusions of all this.

First, America is not a meritocracy, if by that we mean a society in which income, status, or power are heavily determined by IQ. All the evidence suggests that IQ has only moderate impact on adult success, and that this impact is exerted only through the schools.

Second, America seems on balance not to have become more meritocratic in the course of the 20th century. All the evidence suggests that the relationship between IQ and income and status has been perfectly stable. While opportunity has opened up for great segments of the population, the criteria for advancement seem to have involved many things in addition to, and other than, IQ.

Third, something we often incorrectly identify with IQ—namely schooling—seems to be a much more important determinant of adult success than IQ. If getting through school is a mark of merit, then America is moderately meritocratic. But then, in a society in which education is an increasingly universal experience, such a conception of merit begins to lose its meaning.

And finally, among all the many factors which lead to a situation in which some people are poor or hold low-status jobs, lower intellectual ability is not a terribly important one. Being stupid is not what is responsible for being poor in America.

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Russians vs. Arabs

The Age of Disenchantment

Walter Laqueur

SOMEWHERE, undoubtedly, on the agenda of President Nixon's forthcoming talks in Moscow, is the subject of the Middle East. The Egyptians would like the subject to figure prominently, the Israelis would happily see it ignored. As for the superpowers themselves, they really have only one point in common on this issue, namely the desire to prevent a major crisis in which they themselves might have to become involved. Beyond that, it is difficult to envisage any possible deal of mutual benefit. The Soviets may try to exert a certain amount of pressure by pointing to the acute danger of war in the area—they are themselves under intense pressure of various kinds from their Egyptian clients—but since active Soviet military intervention in the Middle East seems to be ruled out for the time being, this pressure will necessarily fall short of outright threat and intimidation.

The Soviet attitude toward the Middle East is a curiously ambivalent one. Commentators in the Soviet press still refer to the area as the world's greatest danger zone, but at the same time there are clear indications that, at least temporarily, the Middle East has been downgraded in the list of Soviet priorities. This is no doubt connected with recent political developments in other parts of the world. But it also has to do with the fact that no major advances have been made in Soviet-Arab relations in recent years. Ten years ago, or even five, Moscow expected steady progress and eventually spectacular results from its Middle East policy. At present, the most Soviet leaders can reasonably hope for is to hold on to what gains they have made. The confidence of the early and middle 60's has given way to a feeling of dissatisfaction and even to muted complaints. It is far too early to talk of a major setback, but there is certainly a great deal of soul-searching nowadays in Moscow, and with increasing frequency Soviet experts are asking what went wrong in the Middle East and why, and what, if anything, can be done about it.

The basic problem facing the Russians in the Middle East—but not, of course, only in the Middle East—is that while they have become heavily involved politically and in some instances also militarily, they are not in full control of the conduct of affairs. Only ten years ago, to quote a leading Soviet commentator, "the stormy break-up of the colonial system and the anti-capitalist slogans of many leaders of the national liberation movement created the illusion that in a very short period the overwhelming majority of the former colonies would go over if not to the socialist, then to the non-capitalist road of development." It was thought that the obvious inadequacy of free-market capitalism to solve the basic problems of the developing countries would inevitably compel the leaders of the new states to choose socialism instead. ("Socialism" in this context, needless to say, means the Soviet model—not democratic socialism, and not the Yugoslav or the Chinese or the Cuban model.) The process of disenchantment with this thesis, which began around 1964, is usually linked with the overthrow of such rulers as Sukarno, Ben Bella, Modibo Keita, Qassem, and Nkrumah, all of whom disappeared within a short time, almost without a struggle. Even in those countries in which radical regimes, run by the army and/or a state party, had emerged, no one showed the slightest willingness to cooperate with the local Communists.

This was a blow, but its full impact was realized only much later. At the time some daring spirits in Moscow developed an optimistic new theory: whatever their professed ideology, the new leaders of the developing countries were building the foundations of socialism. If the conditions for "proletarian" (i.e., Communist) leadership had not yet matured, there was nevertheless ample reason for close collaboration with the new elites. The Soviets insisted on only one precondition, "internal democracy for progressive elements," or as Western observers put it, "licensed infiltration." The Egyptian experience under Nasser gave much ground for hope in this regard; Egyptian Communists, formerly persecuted, were released from prisons and concentration camps and achieved fairly influential positions in the state and party apparatus, albeit not at the very highest level. Even now there are two

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Communist ministers in Syria and a Communist deputy minister in Cairo; in Iraq, too, Communists are part of the ruling national front.

The implications of the new Soviet approach for the Middle East were most ably stated by George Mirsky, the author of an original and provocative study of military dictatorships which has unfortunately not yet been translated into English. Mirsky's work was met with both criticism and approval at home, and the general controversy over the "correct appraisal" of the new political forces still goes on.* Some Western observers have perhaps read too much into these exchanges, assuming wrongly that quarrels among experts inevitably reflect profound differences in the Soviet leadership; in fact there is reason to doubt that Brezhnev and Kosygin are at all familiar with the work of Mirsky and other specialists. On the other hand, the experts' views are of interest for the very reason that they cannot stray too far from the line: if they are not prophets, their publications can with due caution be used as barometers of opinion.

Of late an unmistakable note of skepticism has crept into the writings of these commentators. That they should react sharply to last year's disastrous events in the Sudan, where the Communists and their supporters were savagely suppressed, goes without saying. But there has been growing criticism as well of countries in which the Soviet Union suffered no such dramatic setbacks. One author writing about Algeria concludes sadly that the agrarian reform of 1966 is largely a paper fiction, and that the political activity of the peasantry is weak or nonexistent. Another complains that political life in Syria, Egypt, and Algeria has yet to be democratized and that all the slogans about "handing power over to workers and peasants" are empty of content. Yet a third notes the "slipshod ideology" of the "progressive" regimes, the weakness of their links with the masses, and the fact that the task of creating "vanguard parties of socialist orientation" has turned out to be far more complicated and arduous than was earlier anticipated. Outspoken statements have been made on the need for inculcating habits of "systematic work" in the underdeveloped countries and there has been some questioning of the hitherto unquestioned obligation of a rich (socialist) country to help a poor one. The developing countries, it is being said, should learn to stand on their own two feet instead of taking it for granted that the Soviet Union will provide an unlimited amount of economic aid.

Some of these complaints, which reflect the strains and stresses in current Soviet relations with the Third World, are merely tactical in character, designed to serve warning and register displeasure. But others go much deeper, and it is with these that we are concerned here. One of the issues at stake is the role of nationalism in revolutionary movements, traditionally one of the weakest points of Marxist-Leninist theory. The Soviets underrated the powerful appeal of nationalism in Europe in the 1920's and 1930's, and they have made similar, possibly even more perilous, errors in administering their own empire. Their position on the matter is, to say the least, infused with conflict. According to Soviet doctrine, nationalism is a transitory phenomenon (a position which may well be true under the aspect of eternity, but which is demonstrably useless in analyzing current events). However, Marxist-Leninist theory also distinguishes between the bourgeois nationalism of the West, which is thoroughly bad and reactionary, and the nationalism of an oppressed people, which is a progressive force if properly harnessed and exploited for revolutionary ends. Of late this view too has come in for reexamination. For instance, one author has maintained that "revolutionary forces which use the nationalism of oppressed nations for their own purposes, historically justified as such use may be, have to take the consequences." This somewhat cryptic statement is made a little clearer when the author denounces the exploitation by ruling circles of the growing nationalist fervor in order "to dull class consciousness among the working people so that no discordant notes should sound in the general nationalist chorus. The concept of national unity as such is sometimes used to veil class contradictions and push them out of sight."

AMONG nationalisms, that of the Arabs in particular has long been regarded by Soviet observers as a harmless aberration, to be viewed with tolerance. But here, too, there are signs of a change in attitude. "Arab nationalism," writes Mirsky, "is a particularly strong ideology which bases itself on history, tradition. . . . It makes use of the Palestinian question which is singularly urgent and painful for the Arabs." Yet, Mirsky adds, this ideology, an admixture of political and religious strains, creates a negative attitude toward Communism which it regards as basically internationalist and atheist in character. According to Mirsky, even the revolutionary democrats in the Arab world are prisoners of this way of thinking, and only a very few—the brightest, ideologically most advanced among them—have so far escaped its pernicious consequences.

How can the singularly strong impact of nationalism in the Arab countries, and also elsewhere in the Third World, be explained? Even

* The most interesting non-Soviet reviews are those by U. Ra'anan in *Problems of Communism* (January 1965); R. Lowenthal in *Survey* (January 1966); R. Kanet in *Russian Review* (January 1968); R. Yellon in *Mizan* (March, July 1967); and most recently in great detail, D. Morison in *Mizan* (October-December 1970).

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Mirsky falls back on the time-honored reflex of blaming the "petite bourgeoisie," although he admits (only as an afterthought) that nationalist sentiment may also be linked with the general cultural situation and with the new rulers' low level of political sophistication. But in fact, virtually the entire radical leadership of the Third World, *including* the Communists, is "bourgeois" in origin—petit or higher. On the other hand, Mirsky's explanation is not much help when it comes to a phenomenon like Colonel Qaddafi of Libya, perhaps the most extreme of the new crop of radical nationalists in the Arab world. Born in a Bedouin tent, Qaddafi now commands the disposition of billions of dollars in oil revenues; he may be mad, but he is hardly petit-bourgeois. The class origin of these elites cannot explain why they move with equal ease, first to the "Left" and then to the "Right," often in rapid succession. Insofar as they are socialists, theirs is some kind of national socialism, and the Soviet Union, which has noted this development with regret, does not exactly find itself in a good position to complain, in view of its own record of nationalist deviations.

Another issue which has greatly bothered Soviet policy-makers is that of military dictatorship. All the "progressive" countries in the Middle East are now ruled by army officers. In the beginning (i.e., during the early and middle 50's) the Soviets had a hard time adjusting to this new phenomenon; even Nasser was attacked at first as a fascist adventurer, in accordance with the Leninist doctrine that the army and the police should serve as the tools of the state, which is itself an instrument of class rule. But as Nasser began lining up against the West and increasingly began using socialist terminology in his speeches, Soviet ideologists were mollified. After all, they now argued, class differentiation had not proceeded very far in the Third World, and the army therefore had to comprise a relatively independent force. Thus the Soviet theory of the "progressive military intelligentsia" came into being.

According to this theory, native army officers, by virtue of having been forced by the imperialists to occupy underprivileged positions in the local army, had become agents of patriotic resistance against foreign domination and were therefore to be considered, when they subsequently seized power and declared their countries' independence, as legitimate rulers from the revolutionary point of view. These officers supposedly hailed from social strata much closer to the working class than to the upper-crust bourgeoisie (a debatable contention, incidentally) and they were not just anti-imperialist but also anti-capitalist in outlook. In the context of their societies, the argument continued, they constituted the most enlightened and dynamic and modernizing force.

One should perhaps not take too literally the various theories developed by Soviet authors during the 1960's to explain away the fact of military dictatorship in the Third World. Some of them at any rate had grasped the decisive point: the officer corps was the only group, however small, that had real power and did not hesitate to use it. Nor did these Soviet experts rule out the possibility of setbacks and betrayals. In Mirsky's six-part typology of military dictators, only one out of the six categories was considered more or less reliable from the Soviet point of view: the "revolutionary democrats with epaulets," men like Nasser, Boumédienne, and the Syrian colonels. Up to Nasser's death Egypt was the model country in which everything had gone right from the Soviet point of view, inasmuch as the "national-democratic revolution" had been extended and a "serious shift had taken place in the political thinking of the UAR leadership." (At the same time, a way out was always available in case of unpleasant eventualities, such as when a Nasser was succeeded by a Sadat. "Sometimes the leaders of a military coup are motivated less by patriotism than by a purely career-inspired desire to seize power," wrote one of the Soviet experts.) In general Mirsky predicted that not even "revolutionary democrats with epaulets" could cope in the long run with the tasks facing them, for their mental make-up was simply not attuned to developing the qualities necessary for political work and organizational activity on the highest level. Hence the conclusion that "purely military regimes cannot last long in the contemporary world." The progressive officers were bound to realize that the army was no substitute for political institutions, that they would have to secure the active participation of the "most progressive elements of the working class"—i.e., the Communists—and that they would have to mobilize the masses by establishing an avant-garde political party. At that stage their regimes would, in fact, cease to be military in character.

The assumption underlying this reasoning was that the political development in Egypt under Nasser (to refer to the most obvious example) was irreversible, despite the "ideological weaknesses" of the military leaders, their eclectic and inconsistent doctrines. Practical experience would guide them to the right path whether they liked it or not. For was it not true that in the UAR revolutionary practice had led the military leaders much further than they had originally intended to go, that the "logic of the class struggle" had compelled them to carry out far-reaching changes?

These arguments were widely accepted until a year or two ago, when major setbacks occurred in precisely those countries believed to have progressed furthest on the "road to socialism." One of the consequences of these defeats has been

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the upgrading in Soviet eyes, at least on the theoretical level, of the local Communist parties. Until recently, it was the fashion to accuse the Egyptian and the Algerian Communists of sectarianism in not supporting Nasser and Boumédienne. The Arab Communists, who had had their reservations about close collaboration with the dictators all along, now argue that the Soviets should have paid heed to their earlier warnings; they want no more nonsense about "military socialism."* The Soviet experts for their part now admit there have been errors, and are willing to concede that only the working class (in other words, the Communists) has been "objectively assigned" the role of the vanguard: no other class can replace it in that function.

This sounds very radical, but in practice it leads to "revisionist" policy recommendations. It is one thing to give theoretical support to the Egyptian Communists, and another, far riskier, thing to provide open political assistance which will antagonize the present rulers. The Soviet experts therefore remind the Arab Communists that the peasantry and the lower middle class make up 80 to 90 per cent of the population in every country, so that the Communists will have to make use of "the poor material that objective reality puts at their disposal." Unfortunately, petit-bourgeois ideology dominates the thinking of these masses "and will evidently do so for a long time to come." The revolutionary process is thus bound to continue for several decades, and the present "transitional stage" cannot be measured in terms of months or even years.

Short of direct intervention, it is difficult to imagine how the Soviet Union could install a leadership in the Arab states qualified to supervise the transition to the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Like the native Communists, the Soviets too will have to make use of the "poor material" available and cooperate with military regimes which pursue a foreign policy more or less in line with the Soviet Union only because they happen to depend in varying degrees on Soviet help. But unless the Communist movement is legalized and gains some freedom of action, the "vanguard party" on which Moscow still pins its hopes will simply not come into existence, regardless of the degree of industrialization and modernization achieved. It is of course possible that in some country or other the Communists might seize power; in view of the weakness of the political structures in the Arab world it is by no means certain that a mass party is really necessary for a takeover—a handful of determined junior army officers might suffice for the purpose. But would this necessarily be preferable from the Soviet point of view? The Soviet Union itself is no longer the leading model for other Communist countries, and a Communist regime is not *a priori* synonymous with a regime friendly toward the Soviet Union.

The meaning of all this can be summarized very briefly: whereas only a short time ago it was assumed that in a very few years power in the Arab world would pass into the hands of "avant-garde" (Communist) parties, and that these parties would accept Soviet leadership, it is now openly admitted that the process will take much longer. One can well imagine that in private Soviet commentators are even more pessimistic than this. What prevents them from growing altogether dejected, however, is their belief that the political influence and military power of the Soviet Union will grow in the years and decades to come, that there will be a decisive shift in the world balance of power, and that as a result the Soviet Union will eventually be in a position to exert direct pressure on events in the Middle East. Thus, one Soviet expert has guardedly mentioned the transformation of revolutionary-democratic rule into the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of "the international dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of the world-socialist system." The "system," needless to say, is that of Moscow, not of Mao or Castro or Ceausescu. To be sure, even such veiled hints as this are infrequent; for the time being at any rate, Soviet policy-makers believe in the wisdom of speaking softly while carrying a big stick. They now understand that the situation is vastly more complicated than they had previously supposed, and that Arab nationalism, which on the one hand has abetted Soviet penetration into the Middle East, on the other has inhibited the further growth of Communism (a dialectical process if ever there was one). The Russians know that military dictatorships in the Middle East, however radical their rhetoric, cannot really be trusted—but they have to continue supporting them for the present, until the time comes when they can more forcefully assert their wishes.

WHAT are the aims of the Soviet Union in the Middle East, and to what lengths is it likely to go in achieving them? Southward expansion has traditionally been one of the major points of Russian foreign policy, pre- as well as post-revolutionary. In addition, it is only natural that the present Soviet leadership should wish to assert its newly gained strength in the Middle East at a time when America has been showing an increasing inclination to cut its own commitments. Finally, the investment of effort and prestige has had a momentum of its own: having put their money on Egypt, the Soviets are not about to change horses in mid-stream.

Today oil is very important in this context, although ten years ago, or even five, the subject would hardly have come up. At that time the

* See the controversy in the *World Marxist Review* (1971), pp. 7-9.

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Soviet Union had all the oil it needed for domestic consumption and to supply Eastern Europe as well; it also exported some 50 metric tons per year to the West and to Japan. But consumption in Russia is increasing at a faster rate than production; drilling for new fields involves high investment costs, and transport is often prohibitively expensive, since most of the oilfields are located far from the industrial centers. Soviet spokesmen have admitted that by 1980 their requirements will exceed the 650-70 metric tons they are likely to produce. And at this stage—to cut a very long story short—Middle Eastern oil comes in: not as yet a factor of paramount importance, but one that can no longer be ignored.

Then there is the matter of Soviet military bases. This is no longer a question, as it once was, of port facilities at Alexandria and Port Said. Egypt is now ringed with a net of Soviet air bases, one of the legacies of the Nasser era with which the current Egyptian regime is stuck: if anything, Egypt's dependence on the Soviet Union has increased during the past two years. That the bases fulfill a vital role in Soviet strategy in the Eastern Mediterranean goes without saying; they further represent an investment in money and equipment and personnel on which the Soviet Union would like some day to show a profit, political or otherwise. For if the prospects of installing reliable governments in the Arab capitals are not too good at present, the next best thing in Moscow's view is to consolidate and perpetuate a situation in which the Soviet presence gradually becomes an irreversible fact. It is possible (if not certain) that such a situation has already been reached in Egypt, and Western observers, not to speak of the Israelis, may be pardoned their skepticism when President Sadat announces his intention of ridding Egypt of Soviet soldiers once the Egypt-Israeli dispute is settled.

As for the Soviet leaders themselves, it is more than doubtful that they were aware of what they were letting themselves in for in terms of hard cash when they first became involved in Middle Eastern politics. They certainly did not foresee that over the years Egypt, Syria, and Iraq would consume some 55 per cent of the total military aid extended by Moscow to foreign countries; Egypt alone, the biggest single recipient, got some 40 per cent ($5-6 billion). The present annual flow of Soviet military aid to Egypt represents perhaps as much as 10 per cent of the total Soviet military-equipment budget, except for what is produced for the nuclear and space programs.* This includes the cost of maintaining some 15-20,000 Soviet experts in Egypt (but not that of keeping a fleet in the Mediterranean). The price is of course not beyond the capacity of a superpower to pay, but it is high enough to insure the likelihood of its being subjected to periodic reexamination in the light of changing Soviet priorities. The need to maintain a great and growing army in the Far East, as well as Soviet involvement on the Indian subcontinent, may cause new assessments of the allocations to the Arab world.

THE job of protecting the Soviet investment in the Middle East is a delicate one, full of risks and uncertainties. Any offensive move against Israel on the part of Egypt would involve considerable danger; unlike the case of the India-Pakistan war, where it was clear that the Indians could win without Soviet help, Egypt by itself is incapable of mounting a victorious offense. The best the Soviets can hope for is a continuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict at its present level, or at a slightly lower one. Peace between Egypt and Israel would endanger the Soviet presence by removing its *raison d'être*, but escalation of the conflict would entail great expense and even greater risk from the Soviet point of view. Militarily, the Russians would feel more at ease if they knew the United States would not resist Soviet military intervention in the Eastern Mediterranean, and indeed hints in that direction have not been unforthcoming from Washington: Henry Kissinger was reported on one occasion as having said that America would not intervene in a war over Sinai. But Kissinger has also said that the Soviet presence should be removed from Egypt altogether, and anyway it is highly doubtful that a war could be restricted to Sinai alone. As for the political risks of escalation, they would include most notably the dampening effect on Russia's credibility as a peace-loving future partner in the European Security Conference, and just now the Soviets are pushing very hard to convince Western Europe of their good intentions in this regard.† It cannot, of course, be taken for granted that the European Security Conference will always figure as urgently as it now does in Soviet policy—the threat posed by China in the East may be reduced, or Western Europe may become neutralized without substantial Soviet concessions—and in such an eventuality Soviet military action in the Middle East cannot be excluded, not only as a way of teaching the Israelis a lesson, but also as a way of demonstrating to the whole world that the global balance of power has decisively shifted. Such a situation has not, however, arisen as yet, and provided that no major act of folly is committed in Washington and other Western capitals, it might even be prevented.

But given all these uncertainties and frustrations, can one rely indefinitely on Soviet patience

* This is the estimate made by Dr. Gur Ofer of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in an unpublished paper, "The Economic Burden of Soviet Involvement in the Middle East," presented at a conference at Tel Aviv University, December 1971.

† See my "The Fall of Europe?" in the January COMMENTARY.

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and caution? The Russians have made a massive investment—military, economic, and above all political—in the Arab world. This investment has to be protected, and since the native elites cannot be trusted, what other way is there besides direct control? It is a near classic example of how empires come into being. The Russians have learned to their sorrow in other parts of the world that expansion beyond a certain point causes tremendous problems, but they are also accustomed to having full control over their clients, and they dislike being pushed around. Considering the intrinsic weakness of the clients in question, it would not come as a surprise if some Soviet leader sooner or later decided not to endure the situation any longer.

The Arabs on the other hand are no doubt sincere in their frequent professions of unswerving devotion to the goal of national independence. But many of them are not as yet versed in the intricacies of world affairs, and it has taken them a long time to accept some of the basic geopolitical facts of life. When, in 1948, the late Nahas Pasha, leader of the Egyptian Wafd, was asked about Soviet aims and intentions in the Middle East, he replied that the question was purely hypothetical since Russia was four thousand miles away. His geography was at fault; Cairo—not to mention Iraq and Syria—is closer to the Soviet border than it is to Tripoli or Khartoum. But Nahas expressed the general mood prevailing among Arab nationalists: Russia could not possibly constitute a danger to Arab sovereignty and independence, and the issue of Soviet "designs" in the area was a red herring, invented for all-too-obvious reasons by Western imperialists and their agents.

Since then, Arab leaders have learned a little, but not that much. Some of them realize that growing dependence on the Soviet Union creates certain problems, and that whatever Israel's evil intentions, they have built-in limits. There is no "Israeli" party in Cairo, Baghdad, and Damascus, but there is a "Russian" party which, given the right circumstances, could become a serious contender for power. Although a growing if inarticulate anti-Russian mood can be discerned in the Arab countries, by and large Israel is still considered the main threat. The sorcerer's apprentices from the Nile still argue that they will one day get rid of the Russian demon, too, but only after Israel is defeated and the Arab world has gained full independence and freedom of action. It is a striking example of false consciousness, an inability to differentiate between threats of a very different magnitude. For the time being, Arab nationalists are reluctant to admit that the Arabs can destroy Israel only at the price of their own self-destruction or by ceding their independence for generations to come.

As for the United States, it, unlike the Soviet Union, does not aim at the victory of its "party" in the Arab capitals; there is no such party in the first place. One day it may even occur to the Arabs that, geopolitics and history having thrust them into proximity with one superpower (and the one with the larger appetite at that), their only chance for survival in the long run is to have the support of the *other*. Time, in other words, may work in the interests of the United States, provided of course that a strong military presence is maintained by America in the Eastern Mediterranean to protect not only the existence of Israel but the future of all of Europe. If it were made clear that this presence *will* be maintained, and the ambiguity in the current U.S. position were thereby dispelled, the Middle East might very well cease to be a threat to world peace.

But what about the position of Israel in all this? It has been said that Israel has itself to blame for the current conflict with the Soviet Union and for the consequent instability in the Middle East. If Israel had only abstained from participating in the UN vote on Korea in 1950, if it had refrained from expressing its distaste for the Stalin regime, if it had placed greater stress on the progressive character of the Jewish national liberation movement, if it had adhered to a nonaligned posture, the conflict with Russia—so the argument goes—need never have arisen. Comments of this kind are still being voiced, which does not necessarily mean that they should form the basis of serious discussion. Given the fact that Israel is a state of three, not thirty, million inhabitants, no Israeli act of commission or omission could possibly have affected the Soviet alignment with the Arabs. Even now Israel's future does not really depend solely on its own actions. As long as the American military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean remains at its present level, the Soviet Union will not have full freedom of action, and the independence of Israel and the other countries in the area will be safeguarded. If this balance should be radically upset, the guarantee will vanish. But I do not wish to oversimplify a complex situation: certainly Israel's own posture toward the Soviet Union, as well as toward the Arab states, is of crucial importance, and a rash move on Israel's part would have the gravest consequences. It must be said that Israeli military and political leaders have on the whole tried not to take unnecessary risks, and have attempted to reduce the amount of friction over and above what cannot be changed. Still, a settlement of some kind would be the most effective deterrent of all, for while the real military threat to Israel emanates from Russia, not the Arab countries, it is only by an accommodation with Egypt that this threat can be removed—or at least reduced.

Though Israel's present borders give her max-

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imum military protection, the maintenance of tactical advantages cannot in the long run serve as the major criterion of foreign policy. The main argument against territorial concessions on the part of Israel is that Egypt would use the positions so won as a base for launching another attack against Israel at a future date. That such a possibility exists cannot be denied, but the more one hears about the situation in Egypt the less likely it appears. Once a settlement were reached, it is doubtful that the Egyptians would be eager to renew hostilities. Egypt and Israel have a common interest in retaining their independence in the face of Soviet designs in the area. If Egyptian leaders persist in denying this threat to their independence there is indeed little Israel can do, but it is by no means certain that Egypt will remain blind to the Soviet danger, and Israel may be able to do a great deal to shorten the learning process.

There is an uncomfortable historical parallel here. Between the world wars the countries of East and Middle Europe had two decades in which to settle their differences and rally their forces. For it was clear almost from the beginning that only by standing together could they maintain their independence against overwhelming pressure from the East and West. Instead, they fought one another tooth and nail—over Vilna and Teschen, over Slovakia and Transylvania, over the Dobrudja and Macedonia. And the end came as might have been predicted: first the Germans occupied their territory, and then it fell under Soviet domination. And now it hardly matters any longer which town or which province belongs to which country, for the whole area lies under the thumb of the Soviet Union. Like historical parallels in general, this one should not be stretched too far. But at the very least it may provide food for thought for those who still mistakenly believe that the conflict in the Middle East concerns only Arabs and Israelis.

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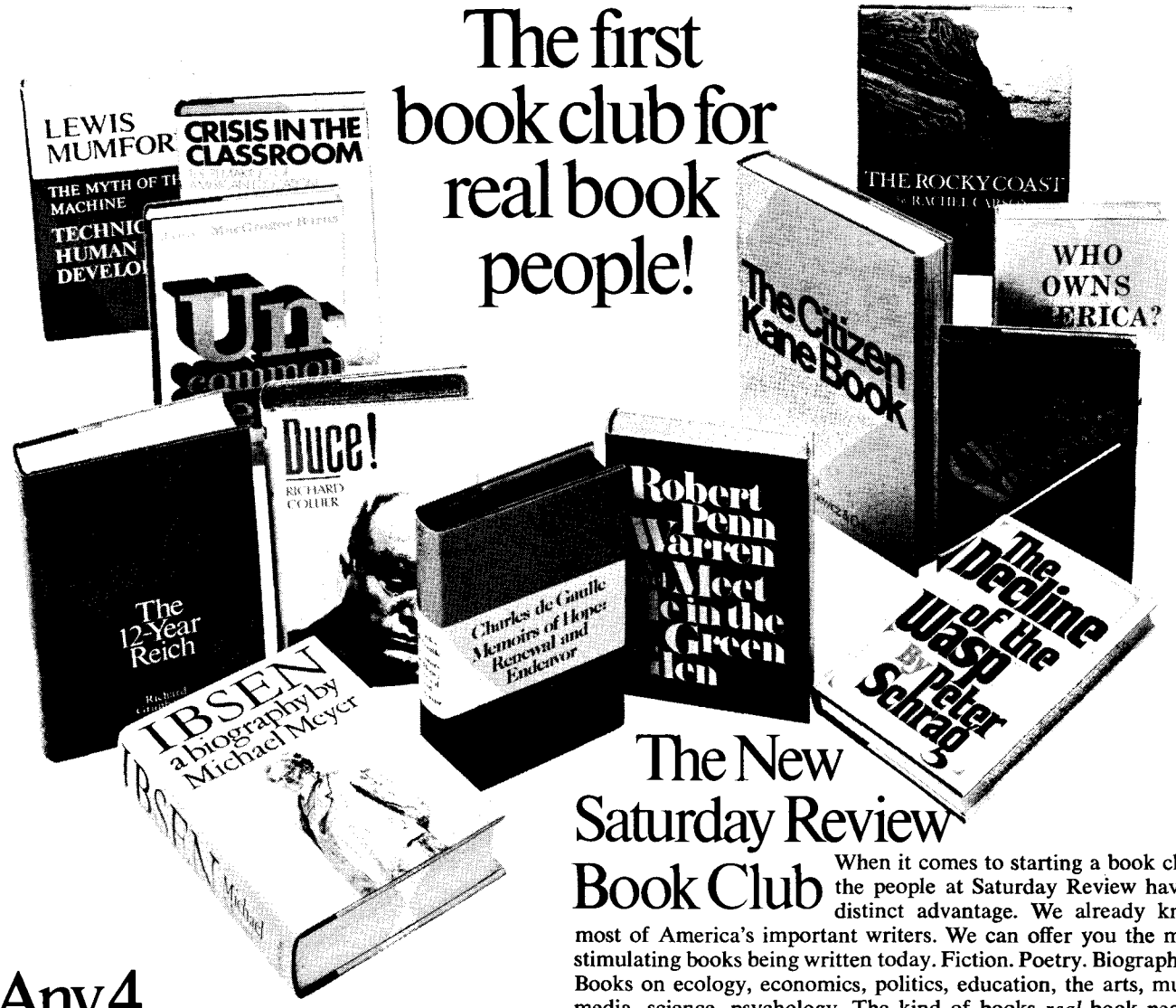

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Jews, Ethnics, and the American City

Marshall Sklare

At a time when the plight of the American city engages so much of our attention—when scarcely a week can pass without the New York *Times* featuring a story about middle-class New Yorkers fleeing the metropolis to seek contentment in a New England village—it would also seem particularly appropriate to analyze the special relationship of the Jew to the American city. For the Jews, more than any other group, have been among America's most enthusiastic city-dwellers, regarding the urban environment not as a problem or a source of pain, but as an opportunity and a place of pleasure. One might even go so far as to say that in their mode of life and occupational patterns American Jews have constituted the perfect urbanites. Furthermore, Jews have played a major role in supplying others with the amenities and graces of urban life (amenities and graces, incidentally, which seem to have lost some of their former attraction).

If Jews have been singularly successful in their accommodation to the American city, their success is not accounted for by anything in their history—East European Jews did not, for instance, merely transfer to an American setting the arts and practices of urban living they had acquired in Warsaw or Kiev or Cracow. In fact, most American Jews are the descendants of villagers. The mass Jewish migrations to the city began only about a century ago, when Jews left their East European hamlets to settle in New York, Philadelphia, Manchester, Johannesburg—*and* in Warsaw. This move followed a precedent set by the German Jews who, half a century or so earlier, had emigrated to New York or Philadelphia, to Berlin or Munich, from their native villages in Bavaria and the Rhineland.

Although they came from villages, Jews never idealized the village experience (the romanticization of the *shtetl* is a rather recent phenomenon). This is not to say that immigrant Jews did not harbor a certain nostalgia for the "old home," as witness the Yiddish stage presentations of the era; but underlying such sentiments there was always a strong element of realism, an awareness that, the warmth of *shtetl* life notwithstanding, the Jews of Eastern Europe occupied a subordinate rung on the ladder of the larger society. (Even in the best of times Jewish security depended on the good will of Czarist officials, who often had to be bribed before they would confer the most elementary rights and opportunities; in less good times the threat of pogroms was constantly in the air.) For the former *shtetl*-dwellers there might be shared nostalgia based on happy recollections of family and community experiences, but even the most sentimental realized there was no returning. As for the more sophisticated Jews, the *shtetl* exerted no nostalgic tug whatsoever, but was regarded—as in the Hebrew literature of the late 19th century—as an abomination, a place of backwardness and bigotry.

For many white American Gentiles, things were different. Whether "ethnics" (the so-called hyphenated Americans: Polish-, German-, Italian-, Greek-, etc.) or "White Anglo-Saxon Protestants," these non-Jewish Americans looked back to a village or rural past to which they remained so strongly attached as to make it difficult for them to become true urbanites. Ethnic Americans, in particular, of whatever origin, even after long residence in America always retained an affection for the village life of their youth, and significant numbers actually returned to the native villages which they had never ceased to regard as their true homes. Of course, the majority of ethnics remained in America, but on their own terms; that is, they sought to recreate the life they had known in the old country. The Italians, for instance, had always lived in close-packed villages rather than in isolated rural cottages or farmhouses, and they moved more aggressively than other immigrant groups to replicate their native patterns in the "Little Italys" which still exist in every large American city. Only with the coming of urban renewal in the 1950's did ambitious planners succeed in destroy-

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ing some of the weaker Italian-American neighborhoods, though they were scarcely able to touch the main centers.[1]

Whereas many ethnics made poor candidates for urban living, Wasps characteristically turned their backs on the city altogether. For in addition to sharing the yearning of the ethnics for a village past, Wasps often held the city in disdain; to them it was an impersonal place, disorderly, threatening, perilous, corrupt, dehumanizing, unnatural, violent. Of course, Wasps were prepared to grant that the city also had some points in its favor; it was, for example, a place of opportunity as well. But Wasps have often been tempted to lay greater stress on the city's menacing, rather than on its beneficent, aspects.[2] As soon as electric streetcars, and later commuter rail lines, made it possible to live at a substantial remove from one's place of business, Wasps departed the city in large numbers (though many, of course, stayed on in town houses or luxury apartments). Thus there sprung up around all the major American cities a ring of middle- and upper-class suburbs which sought to reproduce the village habitations of the past. Even today, residents of such suburbs are known to become aroused when improvements—sidewalks or modern street lighting, for instance—are proposed, which would make it more difficult to simulate the atmosphere of an 18th- or 19th-century village.

The late Harold Ickes sought to expose the phoniness of the urban Wasp's attachment to the past by characterizing Wendell Willkie, who was born in Elwood, Indiana, and went on to become the head of Commonwealth and Southern, a giant public-utilities corporation headquartered in New York City, as "that barefoot boy from Wall Street." But the fact of the matter is that Willkie constantly sought to maintain his roots in Indiana, at least as much out of a sense of his own identity as out of a wish to present himself to the American public as a simple lad from small-town America. Even before he entered politics, Willkie used his money to buy farms in the area where he and his wife had grown up, and he and Mrs. Willkie returned to Indiana at regular intervals. According to one biographer Willkie never felt that his plush apartment on Fifth Avenue was his real home.[3]

As for the old-guard Wasp patriciate, it considered its true habitat to be the family country estate. The Roosevelts—both the Oyster Bay and Hyde Park branches—are a case in point. By Gould or Vanderbilt standards perhaps, neither Oyster Bay nor Hyde Park is a particularly grand establishment, but opulence is not the criterion; the point here is that these estates were designed to serve as self-contained units housing a single family and its servants. Life in such establishments was assuredly not "with people" (to use the phrase that has been applied to the society of the *shtetl*). One might, to be sure, politick in the city or come to town for the winter social season, but the real pleasures of life were located in the countryside.

THUS, as Wasps increasingly fled the city and as the ethnics dug into their urban village enclaves, it was left to Jewish immigrants to espouse the liberating possibilities of city life. But not all Jews, of course. There were, for instance, the Hasidim who arrived in the United States during and after World War II and for whom return to their former East European villages was a political and psychological impossibility. These Jews, not unlike so many Wasps, had a deep distrust of the city. One such Hasidic group—the followers of the Skvirer Rebbe—actually succeeded in establishing their own village (anglicized to "Squaretown" and legally incorporated as "New Square") in New York State's Rockland County, in 1961.

The New Square venture calls to mind an earlier effort at resettling some Jews in the American countryside, an effort prompted by the arrival in the United States, prior to World War I, of a small group of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe who had been influenced by the back-to-the-soil movement. Their dream of a Jewish peasantry was aided and abetted by certain European Jewish philanthropists, notably Baron Maurice de Hirsch who subsidized a series of agricultural colonies in the Americas (the best known was in Argentina). The Baron's scheme gained the enthusiastic support of America's German-Jewish patricians—men like Jacob Schiff, Oscar Straus, and Mayer Sulzberger, who had come to share the notion, learned from their Wasp counterparts, of the city as an evil place, and who also wished to give the lie to Gentile charges that Jews were middlemen who lived off the labor of others—and the result was a network of Jewish farm colonies in the Vineland-Bridgeton-Millville triangle of Southern New Jersey.[4] The scheme,

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[1] For an analysis of the destruction of a secondary Italian neighborhood, see Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans* (The Free Press, 1962).

[2] For the full range of American attitudes toward the city, see Anselm L. Straus, ed., *The American City: A Sourcebook of Urban Imagery* (Aldine, 1968).

[3] Bill Severn, *Toward One World: The Life of Wendell Willkie* (Ives Washburn, 1967), pp. 90-97.

[4] A recent volume gives some of the details of the story: Joseph Brandes, *Immigrants to Freedom: Jewish Communities in Rural New Jersey since 1882* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971). The migrations to New Jersey took place at the same time as the beginning of modern Jewish settlement in Palestine. Pioneering Zionism, of course, took a strongly negative attitude toward the city and stressed the importance of rural and village development. As a consequence a chasm was created between rural and urban development in Palestine and later, in Israel, a disinclination to recognize the inevitability and value of urbanization. These issues are discussed by Erik Cohen in *The City in the Zionist Ideology* (Jerusalem, 1970).

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however, turned out to be a disaster, leaving a trail of destitution in its wake, and about all that can be said in its favor is that the numbers affected were small. It hardly created a ripple among the mass of American Jews, whose faith in the city as the source of economic and social promise remained undiminished. The failure of the South Jersey scheme was in a sense providential, for had it succeeded America would have been deprived of its perfect urbanites—an irony inasmuch as the German-Jewish elite was much concerned that the Jews make a significant contribution to their newly-adopted homeland.

Certainly, the nature of Jewish occupational patterns—partly for reasons of economic necessity—has been uniquely geared to the city. Jews, by and large, engage in economic activities that are most characteristically urban. They are, for instance, prominent in commerce, and those who have gone into manufacturing are specifically concentrated in the manufacture of non-durable goods that are particularly suited to the urban environment. (This is in contrast to the heavy industry pursued by Gentile businessmen; in Pittsburgh, for example, where Gentiles introduced the manufacture of iron and steel, Jews concentrated in the manufacture of inexpensive cigars, stogies.) Thus the historically heavy Jewish representation in the garment industry, especially women's wear.

Jews have also tended to gravitate toward the service professions (law, medicine, accounting, etc.)—a further indication of their affinity for urban modes and manners. It is significant, too, that Jews, in disproportionate numbers, have found their way to the most abstract of the services in question—psychoanalysis, for example. Psychoanalysis might be considered the urban service par excellence, for in its conduct nothing is exchanged but words—and communication is the essence of city existence. This perhaps also may help to explain the large number of Jews who have concentrated professionally in the various media.

An examination of Jewish housing patterns yields additional confirmation of the Jewish predilection for "urbanism as a way of life."[5] Proper urbanism requires a preference for the apartment as against the detached, one-family residence. Of course, most city dwellers must perforce live in apartments; but Jews, it would seem, have been positively ardent in their preference. For non-Jews the one-family house has typically been the preferred mode of residence, boasting as it does a commodity that is abundant in the village but scarce in the urban environment—namely, physical privacy. Jews, however, do not necessarily experience the proximity of neighbors as an invasion of privacy. Accordingly, until the most recent decades, Jews were characteristically apartment-renters rather than home-owners. And true to the urban perspective, Jews tended to regard real estate as a commodity to be traded rather than as an economic good to be consumed.

It was only natural, then, that Jews should have achieved prominence in the apartment-building trade, and, indeed, in the years following World War II Jews in many cities in the United States became the leading builders of apartment houses, quickly outdistancing the Italians whose building skills were of long historical standing. (The trend to Jewish primacy in apartment-building had in fact been observable as early as the post-World War I real-estate boom.[6]) More recently, Jews have also assumed an important role in the construction of commercial office buildings, a trend most pronounced in New York City where, as Nathan Glazer has pointed out, Jewish builders have become predominant in the development of what he terms the "Uris brothers-Emery Roth style of space manufacturing."[7]

But it is the apartment house that remains the emblem of the Jews' love affair with the city. Wherever Jews have formed an important segment of the urban American population, they have been the prime developers and prime residents of apartment houses, especially of the so-called "elevator buildings," those bastions of the urban middle class. The phenomenon is best observed in New York City where this type of building has enjoyed its greatest vogue and where the Jewish preference for such housing was less influenced by non-Jewish tastes than elsewhere in the country. The elevator building was designed for people who had moved up from the working class and the walk-up building, and who, though financially able to buy a one-family home in the suburbs, chose to remain in the city. Such construction reached its apogee along the great boulevards of Brooklyn, the Bronx, and more recently, Queens—Eastern Parkway, Ocean Parkway, the Grand Concourse, and Queens Boulevard. These were essentially "Jewish" avenues, built by Jewish developers for a Jewish clientele. (We might note, too, in passing, that New York Jews who have moved from the middle class to the upper class have also tended to resist the appeal of the one-family house and have marked *their* upward passage by moving from elevator buildings to so-called "luxury apartments.")

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[5] The phrase comes from the title of a classic essay on the American city, by Louis Wirth, published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1938. Wirth, the leading Jewish sociologist of his time, had immigrated to the United States as a youth from a village in the Rhineland.

[6] Jews, one might note, were also active at the time in the field of cooperative housing. Indeed, the leadership in building cooperative-apartment developments came from the so-called "Jewish unions," originating with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

[7] In Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot* (MIT Press, Second Edition, 1970), p. 151.

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It was, of course, inevitable that as American Jews became more acculturated, they should also become increasingly attracted to the suburbs. Members of the German-Jewish upper class began to settle in New York's suburban Westchester County as early as the turn of the century (although some who did so also continued to maintain an apartment in the city). Jews of East European background, on the other hand, were relative latecomers to suburbia, making their transfer only after World War II. This move was as much a matter of necessity as of choice. There was, to begin with, the very serious postwar apartment shortage, soon followed by a general decline in the quality of urban life—decaying neighborhoods, mounting crime, and so on. But it was the decline of the urban school system that was the major factor in tipping the balance. To Jewish parents suburban schools, whatever their faults, seemed to offer the promise of better educational opportunities than did the city schools. Newark —that most unhappy of American cities—illustrates the problem. When Weequahic High School (Philip Roth's well-publicized Alma Mater) began to decline, Newark lost whatever hold it still had on the Jewish population. The mass exodus to the suburbs then became inevitable.

The fact of the matter is that when Jews opted for suburbia they did so reluctantly. To large numbers of Wasps and middle- and upper-class ethnics the single-family house in the suburbs seemed like the most natural thing in the world —the only way to live. For Jews it was otherwise. Of course those Jews who moved into the mass-produced Levittown-type suburbs found that though they lived in separate houses their neighbors were still close by. On the other hand, there were no hallways or lobbies, as in apartment houses, for chance meetings, no elevators for quick exchanges of gossip and news, no corner luncheonettes for ready sociability, no street life to speak of. For many the absence of these staples of the Jewish urban scene was a real deprivation. And despite the growing acceptance of suburbia, Jews never became true converts but remained in large measure believers in the old faith of urbanism. Even today Jews tend to be less interested than others in utilizing real estate as a means of establishing distance between themselves and their neighbors. Real-estate dealers have come to know what to stress in showing a suburban house to a prospective Jewish buyer—comfort, modernization, good schools, and easy access to shopping, transportation, and "people." Thus, even when Jews seemingly embrace suburbia, they still look for the urban virtues—convenience, cultural and social opportunities.

The most telling evidence of the lingering love of suburban Jews for the city is to be found in a Philadelphia study which polled older suburbanites—Jewish and non-Jewish—living in one-family houses, with incomes of $15,000 or more, who either worked in downtown Philadelphia or had retired, and whose children were all eighteen years old or over.[8] With regard to future residential plans, the investigator discovered that "almost all of the suburban non-Jews . . . wished to remain in their single-family homes, whereas the overwhelming majority of Jews either wished or were actually planning to move into new urban high-rise apartments." It may of course be doubted, given the present situation, whether many of these Jews will succeed in returning to the city. Urban crime and decay, the continuing apartment shortage, high rents and poor maintenance—all combine to make residence in the suburbs a more pleasing prospect than it was as recently as a decade ago. To accommodate the situation, developers have begun to build high-rise apartment houses in the suburbs, as well as garden apartments,[9] thus affording many elderly Jewish families, who seek out housing of the kind that is reminiscent of the city, the additional advantage of remaining within easy reach of their children and grandchildren.

Jews, then, typically continue to be perfect urbanites (wherever they may live), their positive preference for city life fueled by the social, cultural, and economic predispositions we have been discussing. But how has the Jewish romance with the American city been regarded by outside observers? To begin answering this question we must recall that the so-called ghettos, the areas of settlement where the mass of Jewish immigrants first set down their American roots, were in fact slums, with all the dirt and crowding and squalor that the term implies. Today we may congratulate ourselves with the recognition that these slums were remarkably free of social deviance, violence, and despair, but they were hardly recognized as model communities during their heyday. William Dean Howells, for instance, came to inspect the Lower East Side, as did Henry James, and both writers concurred in a strong distaste for the ghetto.

Of course, there were sympathetic observers as well, men like Jacob Riis, Lincoln Steffens, and Hutchins Hapgood, who made earnest attempts to understand the life of the ghetto and were attracted by its vitality.[10] Hapgood, in particular, found in the ghetto a kind of spiritual home. He had grown up in Alton, Illinois and he

[8] Donald M. Fenmore, "Comment on Hoffman's 'Outlook for Downtown Housing,'" *Journal of the American Institute for Planners*, November 1961, p. 334.

[9] Between 1960-70 housing units overall increased by 18 per cent but suburban apartment units increased by 96 per cent.

[10] For an anthology of contemporary accounts of the Lower East Side during its heyday, together with an excellent introduction, see Milton Hindus, ed., *The Old East Side* (Jewish Publication Society of America, 1969).

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came to regard that town very much as the enlightened Jews of the 19th century, the *maskilim*, did the *shtetl*—an arid, uncultured, stultifying place. To Hapgood New York represented the vigorous opposite of Alton; and the Lower East Side, the quintessence of the metropolis. In his celebration of the Lower East Side, *The Spirit of the Ghetto*[11], Hapgood noted that the Jewish neighborhoods were populated by people who accepted rather than rejected the city. He sought to convey to his Wasp readers the message that they should do likewise.

The exceptional quality of Hapgood's understanding of Jewish urbanism can be better appreciated when contrasted with another contemporary account, *The Zone of Emergence: Observations of the Lower Middle Class and Upper Working Class Communities of Boston, 1905-1914*, a series of sociological reports by Robert A. Woods and Albert J. Kennedy.[12] Woods was the director of South End House, Boston's first settlement house, and a leading national figure in the settlement-house movement. Kennedy was his chief lieutenant, later his successor at South End House, and still later the head of the University Settlement in New York. Both were ordained Protestant ministers. Their staff, who assisted in the research, included two ministers' sons, Ordway Tead and George Cary, as well as a minister's daughter, Mrs. Woods, who served as her husband's collaborator. The Protestant factor is not without significance for, as Sam Bass Warner, Jr., the urban historian who edited *The Zone of Emergence* for publication, notes in his preface to the work, the unstated objective of the South End House group was "to help Boston's native and immigrant poor achieve the condition and attitudes of middle-class life"—that is, to turn them into Yankee Protestants of a kind.

One might have expected Woods and Kennedy to have become enamored of the Jews, for of all the groups newly settled in Boston, of whatever origin or background, the Jews came closest to sharing their aspirations. As it happened, they harbored quite different notions on the subject. As Warner puts it, they considered the Jews "altogether a dubious addition to the nation." Given their religious predilections, Woods and Kennedy did admit to enjoying catching glimpses of the Sabbath candles through the windows of the ghetto and they also professed to admire what they called the "feeling for the ethical values inculcated in the Jewish home-life and hallowed for some at least by the religious observances." But that was as far as they would go in praise of the Jews.

UNACCOUNTABLY—for no other ethnic minority was more resistant to middle-class Protestant ideals—Woods and Kennedy selected the Italians as the immigrant group which constituted the greatest asset to the American city. "No other body of immigrants of similar quality," they declared, "has made greater and sounder progress. . . ." They admired the Italians for their skills as builders—"As a property holder the Italian deserves the highest praise . . . he builds his house of brick rather than wood"—and for their thrift:

> A further saving is effected by the use of second-hand brick and stone. Italians frequently take the work of tearing down old buildings and they sell the used material to their countrymen. Such brick is cheaply cleaned and is probably every whit as solid as new material would be.

As for the Jews:

> Every Jew is a born real-estate speculator. Even the poorest among them manage somehow to obtain a house. Having secured title by load-[ing] on all the mortgages that the property will stand, the equity is used as a basis for trade. Houses are traded somewhat as the Gypsies swap horses.

Moreover:

> In comparison with the . . . Italian districts the Jewish colony seems peculiarly dirty and dismal. . . . The environment is the dirtiest and most noisome on the island. The passage ways of the tenements are dark, filthy, and permeated with fetid odors, while the litter on the floors, the torn wall-paper, and the kicked-out banisters bear witness to the presence of . . . tenants carelessly content with squalor.

Woods and Kennedy were able to discern only one defect in the Italians, their lack of interest in education. The Jewish emphasis on education, however, seemed to them in somewhat bad taste: "Almost any adult Jew grows quite animated in telling of the prowess of his children in High School, or the brilliance of the near relative which he invariably has in Harvard."

Aside from whatever ingrained anti-Semitism may have been involved, the admiration of Woods and Kennedy for the Italians, and their reservations concerning (if not contempt for) the Jews, had a logic of its own. Despite their devotion to Boston's general welfare, Woods and Kennedy were not upholders of urbanism. Rather, they were admirers of the countryside, of the village, of the virtues of an older America. Though they worked in Boston, they were not of Boston. Woods, according to Warner, was "a stranger to the city and its slums." He had been born in a suburb of Pittsburgh and educated at Amherst and at Andover Theological Seminary. "When

[11] Funk and Wagnalls, 1902. The work has recently been reissued in two new editions, one edited by Moses Rischin (Harvard University Press, 1967) and the other edited by Harry Golden (Funk and Wagnalls, 1965).

[12] MIT Press, Second Edition, 1969. (The manuscript was discovered in 1958 by a Harvard senior in search of material for an honors thesis, in a coal bin in Boston's South End House.)

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he moved to Rollins Street in the South End of Boston," Warner writes, "he was as exotic a resident as the latest arrival. . . ." Woods's vision of the city was as a village writ large: "[He] never abandoned his hope that the model of the village could be used to build city neighborhoods and thereby bring a regeneration of American urban society." A year before his death, in 1925, "at the urging of his Amherst College friends, Woods went so far as to write a campaign biography of Calvin Coolidge. He saw Coolidge as the example of the best ways of the old rural America, and he hoped that Coolidge's presidency would serve to revive the respect for and use of these ways."

To Woods and Kennedy, then, the Italian immigrants seemed kindred spirits, fellow believers in the virtues of traditional village ways. The Jews, on the other hand, were urban cosmopolites. (Just as Woods and Kennedy overlooked the problems the Italians brought to the city, so too they ignored the ready Jewish acceptance of the virtues of middle-class life.) Their attitude, it should be noted, was shared by some segments of the Jewish community as well. The upper-class German Jews, as we have already seen, busied themselves with schemes for transforming ghetto residents into farmers; and the social and philanthropic institutions which the German Jews established on New York's Lower East Side—the Educational Alliance, for instance—were intended to ease ghetto Jews out of their "inferior" East European culture. Another group which held the ghetto in contempt was, oddly enough, the Jewish Communists. One would have thought the Communists would welcome the existence of the ghetto, finding therein fruitful soil for the implantation of their ideas and programs. Instead, they reviled it in the harshest terms. (The novel, *Jews without Money*, by Michael Gold,[13] is perhaps the most interesting illustration of the tendency.) Finally, the ghetto was also scorned by the bourgeois, assimilationist sector of the Jewish community, many of whose members charged it with parochialism and intellectual aridity. This attitude found high expression in a volume entitled *The Ghetto*, by Louis Wirth,[14] one of the best-known of the urban studies emanating from the University of Chicago in the 1920's, then the center of research on the American city. What Wirth in effect did (not consciously, to be sure) was to contrast Maxwell Street, Chicago's prime ghetto thoroughfare, which he saw as sterile and anachronistic, with the Midway of the University of Chicago, which he considered as a kind of New Jerusalem. Wirth, given his bias, was unable to appreciate the special Jewish urban qualities. Ghetto Jews won no praise from him for having successfully avoided the social problems which plagued other groups. In fact, in certain passages of *The Ghetto* it is hard to discern any difference in attitude between Wirth on the one hand and Woods and Kennedy on the other.

NOWADAYS, of course, one would look hard to find anyone—no matter what his ethnic background, attitude to group identity, political persuasion, or class level—willing to say a bad word about the Jewish ghetto. A glow of romance hangs over Maxwell Street and Hester Street, and the ghetto has retroactively been invested with all the virtues—safe streets, a pulsating community life, a sense of "caring"—notably absent from the contemporary urban and suburban scene. The harsh memories of an earlier generation have softened, and for those who never knew the ghetto or who left it decades ago there is a new appreciation, fed by a recent outpouring of books about the Lower East Side, all of them positive and celebratory in tone.[15] The celebration of the ghetto reached a climax of sorts with the Jewish Museum's exhibition, in 1966, entitled *The Lower East Side: Portal to American Life 1870-1924*. The show attracted a great deal of attention and was in fact one of the most successful events in the Museum's history. Alfred Kazin has described the scene:[16]

> One saw great crowds of prosperous, well-dressed, extremely sophisticated people—the usual museum crowd—standing in front of enormously blown-up pictures of their parents and grandparents waiting on Ellis Island benches, or standing behind pushcarts on Hester Street while children got some relief at open hydrants from August in New York.

Kazin also noted that there seemed to be two sides to the exhibition. One of course, was celebration. Look! the prosperous, well-dressed, etc. viewers seemed to be saying, look how far we have come from our humble origins! But the other side of the coin revealed a sadness and an awareness that the beloved city had become a dangerous, bankrupt place:

> The most extraordinary photograph taken by Jacob Riis . . . showed a bearded Jew preparing for the Sabbath eve in a coal cellar on Ludlow Street. It is 1900 and he lives in a coal cellar; but there is a Sabbath loaf on the grimy table in front of him, he will not die in a Polish ditch for the greater glory of the master race, and in the 1960's his grandchildren will walk

[13] Liveright, 1930. (A new edition, with an introduction by Michael Harrington, was published by Avon Books in 1965.)

[14] University of Chicago Press, 1928.

[15] Of the many volumes, two are of more than routine interest: *The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914*, by Moses Rischin (Harvard University Press, 1962) and *The Downtown Jews*, by Ronald Sanders (Harper & Row, 1969). Concurrently with the new appreciation of the Lower East Side, a more sophisticated understanding of the contemporary slum has emerged among sociologists. See particularly Gerald D. Suttles, *The Social Order of the Slum* (University of Chicago Press, 1968). In addition to its general perspectives, the book contains significant material on the Italians.

[16] "The Writer and the City," *Harper's*, December 1968. See also Robert Alter, "Exhibiting the Lower East Side," COMMENTARY, January 1967.

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out of the museum, down Fifth Avenue, not even having to say to themselves that the city has been their savior, that it was once a frontier, exciting in anticipation and fact. They have come to these photographs looking for their ancestors, their old selves, their hidden selves. The city is no longer their frontier, and usually they are afraid of it as well as ashamed of it. The city that saved them has by now worn out their expectations of it! "It is impossible to live in New York." That is the first and last thing New Yorkers now say about New York: *it* is impossible.

"IT IS impossible." The current disillusionment with the city stems from many sources. Perhaps especially problematical for Jews has been the continuing influx into the city of the lower-class migrant groups—Southern blacks, Puerto Ricans, Appalachian poor, and Chicanos—who bring with them a host of social problems lacking in intrinsic solution. Unlike the Jews, these newcomers to the city have no tradition of communal self-help. Urban violence takes its greatest toll on the depressed communities themselves, but it has grown sufficiently in strength and scope to affect all segments of the city. Jews, given their particular occupational and residential patterns, and given too their centuries-old psychological abhorrence of violence, are especially vulnerable victims—to say nothing of the increase in anti-Semitism that has become manifest recently. A further threat to Jewish urban ease and security is the growing demand for community control, a development which has found support among the Wasp upper- and middle-classes (some of whom voice their sympathy from the suburbs). As for the ethnic middle- and working-class, who continue to reside in the city, its members are not really urbanites but rather, as we have seen, urban villagers, with few concerns beyond their own neighborhoods. All of which leaves the Jews as possibly the last, lonely defenders of the urban way of life.

Jews were indeed celebrated as such by *Fortune* magazine in a special issue (February 1960) devoted to the future of New York City (the mass media were then just beginning to discover the "urban crisis"). An article entitled "The Jewish Elan" took note of the Jewish contribution to the life of the metropolis:

> The great Jewish population gives New York much of the dynamism and vigor that make the city unique among all the cities on earth. And surely it can be said that the Jewish *élan* has contributed mightily to the city's dramatic character, its excitement, its originality, its stridency, its unexpectedness.

The article seemed to imply that Jews were the only group that really cared about the future of the city. While the *Fortune* piece was free of the old Woods-Kennedy type of criticism of the Jews, in its tribute to Jewish urbanity it failed to suggest that the Jews might possibly have their own problems with the city. For the truth of the matter is that, for all their devotion to the city, the Jews, nowadays at any rate, are less than the successful urbanites that so many of them appear to be.

The most striking case in point is the rapid decay—in some instances, the total disappearance—of many of the old urban Jewish neighborhoods. The cycle from non-Jewish to Jewish neighborhood and back to non-Jewish is sometimes a mere thirty years. In communities where blacks form a high proportion of the population, as in Detroit, the cycle has been played out even more quickly. Jewish failure to sustain neighborhood life is in sharp contrast to Italian success. As Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan have observed:[17]

> The first Italian neighborhoods proved remarkably stable. Areas that were Italian in 1920 remain so, somewhat attenuated, today. . . . While the Jewish map of New York City in 1920 bears almost no relation to that in 1961, the Italian districts, though weakened in some cases and strengthened in others, are still in large measure where they were.

The situation has reached such extreme proportions that there are now books—poignantly similar in tone to the volumes which commemorate the destroyed communities of Western and Eastern Europe—memorializing but-recently-vanished American-Jewish urban neighborhoods, such as Brooklyn's Brownsville.[18]

How to account for the corrosion and/or disappearance of the old Jewish neighborhoods? The answer lies in the fact of the Jews' upward mobility, greater than that of many other groups, in their high level of acculturation, and in the peculiarity of the Jewish family structure. As Jews move up the class ladder, they often find themselves outgrowing their old neighborhoods and seeking homes elsewhere, in what they feel to be more suitable surroundings. Italians, on the other hand, including those who have risen in class, tend to acculturate more slowly to American norms than do Jews and thus tend to remain in their old districts even when they can afford better. And while the Jewish family is famous for its closeness, rarely do we find parents and children, especially married children, sharing the same household (unlike the Italians, the Jewish generations also avoid living in the same building and frequently even in the same neighborhood).

There is a further factor, the most important of all, and that is the Jews' lack of commitment

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17 *Beyond the Melting Pot, op. cit.*, p. 187.

18 See Alter F. Landesman, *Brownsville: The Birth, Development and Passing of a Jewish Community* (Bloch, 1969).

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to their physical environs. The Jewish neighborhood per se seems to have little symbolic, or even actual, significance for its residents, and its special facilities—synagogues, schools, kosher butchers, delicatessens, etc.—are looked upon as mere conveniences. There is little feeling for the area itself, and hence no overwhelming desire to preserve it from decay. The explanation which first suggests itself for this attitude is that Jewish psychology has been conditioned, by thousands of years of living in Exile, to react to situations of stress by a kind of avoidance behavior. Thus Jews did not feel that Brownsville, say, really belonged to them; when others claimed it, the Jews moved elsewhere.

Most recently, however, we find instances where the impulse to flight has been arrested. This latest development, marked by a new appreciation among Jews of their urban neighborhoods and in some cases even by the conscious attachment to them of symbolic and historical significances, is a consequence in part of the ever diminishing supply of alternative areas for Jewish settlement, and in part of the persistence of a Jewish working class—including some Hasidic groups—which simply cannot afford to move elsewhere. But there are deeper reasons why Jews are at last taking an urban stand, and these have their roots in two events far removed from the experience of American cities but nevertheless impinging on the consciousness of some of their Jewish inhabitants—namely, the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel. For some years after World War II the tendency of many American Jews was to repress any thought of the Holocaust. But that has now changed—as witness the introduction into Jewish school curriculums of Holocaust studies—and the new openness to the memory of the Holocaust has brought with it a sensitivity to assaults against the Jewish group, from whatever quarter, and a resolve not to yield. The impact of the establishment of the State of Israel, and especially of the Six-Day War, has been even greater in this regard, and has given the American Jew a new sense of ethnic pride; it has made him, ironically, feel more rather than less secure on American soil.

All of this may help to give us a better understanding of what is currently happening in one predominantly Jewish neighborhood, the Forest Hills section of Queens in New York City, where a controversy continues to rage over the construction of a proposed public-housing project, part of the city's "scatter-site" housing program aimed at putting low-income residents, many of them blacks and Puerto Ricans, into middle-income neighborhoods. Local people have expressed fear that the project, in addition to placing a strain on overburdened schools and transportation facilities, will also introduce a host of social problems into an area that has hitherto managed to stay free of the more egregious urban excesses, and that, as a result, they will be forced to abandon the neighborhood. Some Jews resolved to resist. Their decision to oppose the low-income project and to fight for the integrity of their neighborhood—their refusal, in effect, to accept the inevitability of another Brownsville—may come to be regarded as a historic event in the relationship of the Jew to the American city. It can be seen from that point of view as an act of affirmation, signifying a desire to keep faith with the city, its possibilities and potential rewards.

But the signs of a new Jewish relationship to the city actually predate the Forest Hills controversy. When crime rates in New York began to rise in the 1960's and the more affluent Jews began to move out of certain Brooklyn neighborhoods, younger Jewish volunteers organized unarmed night patrols. At about the same time one could find instances of synagogues becoming involved with neighborhood conservation efforts, acting as agents or as quasi-agents in real-estate transactions—the most notable example being the Conservative synagogue in the Laurelton section of Queens. In 1969 there was unexpected support in poorer Jewish neighborhoods for Mario Procaccino, the "law-and-order" candidate for Mayor of New York on the Democratic ticket whose message to the Jews was that he would see to it that Jewish neighborhoods remained as Jewish as Italian areas had remained Italian. And, of course, there was the phenomenon of the Jewish Defense League, whose slogan "Never Again!" may be interpreted to mean, among other things, that Jews will not continue passively to accept their fate in the American city, as refugees constantly in search of new neighborhoods.

Of all the groups making their homes in the American city, historically it has been the Jews who best accommodated to the urban ambience. In recent years, their romance with the city has in many cases given way to despair, a change which cannot be attributed entirely to the general urban decline or the impact of new populations. For Jews as a group carry within themselves the seeds of their own urban problem; the Jewish urban crisis, in large part, derives from the insufficient attachment Jews have felt for their own neighborhoods. Now we can see the signs of a new phase in which some Jews are attempting to reshape their relationship to the city by achieving a balance between their traditional attachment to the urban way of life—wherein the city as a whole takes precedence over neighborhood—and loyalty to neighborhood—wherein Jews join with their neighbors in striking roots in the "urban village." If the effort meets with success, it will represent a radically new mode of group adjustment to the American city.

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Academic Freedom & the Franklin Case

Herbert L. Packer

THE action of Stanford University in firing a tenured professor, H. Bruce Franklin, has received nationwide publicity. Approving editorials appeared in the New York *Times*, the Los Angeles *Times*, and the San Francisco *Chronicle*. An article in the Sunday New York *Times Magazine* suggested that Franklin's civil liberties had been infringed. The question of whether this is true, whether Professor Franklin was fired for his beliefs, merits an examination of the case from its beginning. Additional questions raised by the affair include: when and how does a university protect itself from coercion and violence by its faculty and students; what are the obligations, as well as the protections, of academic freedom; what are the limits of dissent on a university campus; under what circumstances does dissent become incitation?

Franklin was fired as a result of a decision reached by an elected board consisting of his equals on the faculty which found that he had intentionally incited students and others to engage in illegal acts on the university campus under circumstances in which he knew that his incitement would increase the risk of such conduct actually occurring. The process through which this tribunal held Franklin's conduct to be deserving of the penalty of dismissal is revealed by the opinion they wrote. My account of the case, with the exception of the passages narrating events that took place before the charges were filed, is based on the Board's opinion. I think that the faculty tribunal did the right thing and that the cause of free speech on campuses, of academic freedom, and of civil liberties was advanced by their action and by the quality of their concern for the values of constitutionally-protected speech.

I

As for background, Bruce Franklin is a self-proclaimed revolutionary. He traces his views from Chairman Mao, thence from Stalin through Lenin, and ultimately to Marx. He stoutly maintained during the hearings that he was careful never to engage in any violent acts because the Movement needed his presence as a faculty member. He considers the distinction among thought, words, and action to be a bourgeois quibble. It is a nice irony that during the hearings he relied on this "bourgeois" quibble to save him. It is quite natural, too, that, holding these views, he was careless in maintaining the distinction between mere speech and incitement.

Franklin only recently became a convert to these views. He is a graduate of Amherst, a former navigator in the Air Force, a young scholar who took his Ph.D. at Stanford, which promptly hired him as an assistant professor. He was soon hired away from Stanford by another university which was attracted by his growing reputation as a Melville scholar. Stanford hired him back as an associate professor with tenure.

He describes himself as having been a Stevensonian Democrat who supported Lyndon Johnson for the Presidency in 1964. He spent a year in France during 1966-67 which apparently served to complete his political education. He then became convinced that revolution was a necessity. During his time abroad, he apparently met some young Vietnamese who were adherents of the Vietcong and was deeply influenced by them. On his return to Stanford, he began to put his changed views into practice. He recently changed the title of his principal course from "Hawthorne and Melville" (which some wit described as being "Ho-thorne and Mao-ville") to "Melville and Marx."

The years between 1967 and the present were a very bad time for Stanford as well as for other universities. The period can be characterized as something like a reign of terror. "Trashing" or window-breaking cost the university about a quarter of a million dollars. There were at least five sit-ins during the period, which disrupted the lives of the community. There were numerous incidents of arson, including destructive fires in which scholars lost irreplaceable papers. A staff member had his house fire-bombed. Another was shot at through the front window of his living room. The president's office was destroyed by

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arson. On occasion, faculty, staff, and students stood round-the-clock fire watches. Throughout this period Franklin was in the forefront, accelerating the coercion and violence through his charisma as a tenured professor, and urging impressionable young people on to ever more activity.

By 1970 Franklin was a member of a group called Venceremos, which emerged as a result of a merger between the on-campus revolutionary group and an off-campus group consisting largely of Chicanos. Through his teaching and his charismatic speaking Franklin supplied Stanford students as recruits for Venceremos. It is far from clear, however, whether Franklin is really in charge of the group or is merely its captive.* It is probably closer to the truth to say that he became the captive of the ideas supporting the use of violence that he propounded and his teaching became indistinguishable from his ideology. Many people have observed that he should have been dismissed for incompetence as a teacher. His teaching, which was not at issue in the hearing that led to his dismissal, was bizarre. To mention just one example, he cited Edgar Snow as the leading prose writer in English of this century.

Two successive presidents apparently decided not to try to remove Franklin, which may have been a good thing, since removing him required the support of the faculty; and the faculty, of course, was deeply sensitive to issues of academic freedom. In the fall of 1970, Richard W. Lyman, the former Provost, was made President. Lyman is a historian specializing in recent British history; he has served as correspondent for the *Economist* on American affairs; he has been an active Democrat; during the early stages of our involvement in Vietnam, which he has consistently opposed, he helped to organize what may have been the first teach-in on the war. He is, moreover, a highly faculty-oriented president. As Franklin's acts escalated, it fell to President Lyman to initiate action against Franklin. The incidents that caused the initiation of charges came early in 1971.

II

THE charges against Professor Franklin were based by President Lyman on a provision in the Statement of Policy on Appointment and Tenure (hereafter *Tenure Statement*) at Stanford which states that a faculty member has the right not to be dismissed without a finding of "substantial and manifest neglect of duty" or "personal conduct substantially impairing the individual's performance of his appropriate functions within the University community." The *Tenure Statement* was drafted by an elected faculty committee, ratified by a unanimous vote of the Stanford faculty, and put into effect by the Board of Trustees on September 21, 1967. The specific charges against Franklin which required findings of fact by a tribunal were:

> (1) On January 11, 1971, Professor Franklin intentionally participated in, and significantly contributed to the disruption of a scheduled speech by Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. Such conduct prevented Ambassador Lodge from speaking, forced cancellation of the meeting, and denied to others their rights to hear and be heard.
>
> (2) On February 10, 1971, a war-protest rally was held in White Plaza. At that rally Professor Franklin urged the audience away from tactics aimed at influencing government policy off-campus. Instead he urged and incited students and others to disrupt University functions by shutting down the Computation Center. Subsequently a shutdown was effected by an unlawful occupation of the Center.
>
> (3) Following the unlawful occupation of the Computation Center, Professor Franklin significantly interfered with orderly dispersal in response to police orders by intentionally urging and inciting students and others to disobey the orders to disperse.
>
> (4) Following these events, during an evening rally in the Old Union Courtyard Professor Franklin intentionally urged and incited students and others to engage in disruptive conduct which threatened injury to individuals and property. Acts of violence followed.

The hearings on Professor Franklin were held by a tribunal consisting of seven tenured faculty members, who had been elected by vote of all the faculty of the University. The Advisory Board, which was designated by the *Tenure Statement* to hear cases in which a faculty member desires to have a hearing before he can be subjected to sanctions, is a group that advises the President on matters concerning the faculty. Specifically, the Board is required to pass on all appointments and promotions before they are made. Membership on the Advisory Board is perhaps the highest honor that can be bestowed on a faculty member by his colleagues. The members of the Advisory Board that heard the Franklin case were: Donald Kennedy, Chairman of the Board, Chairman of the Department of Biology; David A. Hamburg, Vice Chairman of the Board, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry; G. L. Bach, Frank E. Buck Professor in the Graduate School of Business and Professor of Economics; Robert M. Brown, Professor of Religion; Sanford

* See, in connection with Venceremos, the description by an observer sympathetic to Franklin, Kenneth Lamott, "In the Matter of H. Bruce Franklin," the New York *Times Magazine*, January 23, 1972. "Franklin keeps a Remington 12-gauge automatic shotgun 'very available' in his house and has carried it when meeting policemen at the front door. 'We often have extra armed security in the house,' he told me. (By 'extra armed security' he meant other members of Venceremos, who are called together by an alert system when the police threaten them.)"

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M. Dornbusch, Professor of Sociology; David M. Mason, Chairman of the Department of Chemical Engineering; and Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky, Director and Professor, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center.

This group includes two men who, along with other faculty members, had earlier in 1971 manned a picket line outside a draft board to protest against the Vietnam war. Others have been active in the anti-war movement. One of the other members, a distinguished scientist, a former member of the President's Science Advisory Commission, was an influential opponent of President Nixon's anti-ballistic missile. All are distinguished scholars. This group held hearings which consumed the entire afternoons of thirty-three days; they listened to the testimony of 111 witnesses who were called by the University or by Professor Franklin. They heard about one million words of testimony and argument, which are contained in a transcript that runs to well over five thousand pages. The hearings were conducted in an auditorium that was open to the public, telecast into other public hearing rooms, and broadcast over the Stanford radio station. The hearings were a model of judicious care.

As provided for by the *Tenure Statement*, both the University and Professor Franklin were entitled to representation by counsel. The University was represented during the hearings by a young lawyer from Los Angeles who was a graduate of the Stanford Law School. Professor Franklin was represented before the hearing by a San Francisco law firm. He chose during the hearing to conduct his own defense. He was, however, aided by a number of persons, principally by a recent graduate of the Harvard Law School. The Advisory Board had as its counsel a professor of law at Berkeley, who was particularly helpful in connection with rulings that the chairman, Professor Kennedy, had to make on objections and motions during the hearings.

Franklin's original Answer to Charges, filed before the hearings began, relied in part on defenses based on the Nuremberg Principles and on the doctrine of necessity. The argument apparently was that since Henry Cabot Lodge was a "war criminal," Franklin had the right to prevent him from speaking; as to the other charges, Franklin had the right to take action against the University's "complicity in the Vietnam war." But Franklin apparently changed his strategy, for these defenses, which many people sympathetic to Franklin thought were the gist of the case, were not advanced in the final arguments.

III

The first charge against Franklin was based on the so-called Lodge incident. Former Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge was invited by the conservatively administered Hoover Institution, an affiliate of the University, to deliver a lecture on January 11, 1971, in the University's Dinkelspiel Auditorium. Many persons sympathetic to Venceremos, including Franklin, were present. Because of the chanting, clapping, and shouting from the audience, Lodge could not deliver his speech. The director of the Hoover Institution, Glenn Campbell, stated from the platform that he was terminating the program because of the disruption. Subsequently, President Lyman informed Professor Franklin that he was preferring charges against him in connection with the Lodge incident and his alleged central role in it. The President indicated his intention of seeking Franklin's suspension. Franklin seized this charge as an opportunity to demonstrate the University's complicity in the Vietnam war. Answering the President's charge, he said:

> I do not deny demanding that Lodge and the two representatives of the Hoover Institution answer to the massacre of the men, women, and children of My Lai, the fire bomb and herbicide raids on the countryside of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, the pretense that China is an island in the Pacific Ocean, the invasion and destruction of Korea, and the brutalization and murder of American men sent to die for the profits of the Lodges, the Packards, and your other masters. I would agree that whatever I and others did on January 11th constitutes inappropriate behavior. The appropriate response to war criminals is not heckling, but what was done to them at Nuremberg; they should be locked up or executed. . . .

Subsequently, the President added the other charges to the one based on the Lodge incident and sought Franklin's dismissal. The *Tenure Statement* did not specify a standard of proof. The Advisory Board held, however, that the University must prove its case "by strongly persuasive" evidence.

During the hearing, Franklin and his witnesses contended that he had not joined in the chanting and rhythmic clapping, but had only spoken aloud a few times, each occasion being distinguishable on the tape of the event. The Advisory Board held unanimously that, because of conflict in testimony, the University had failed to prove the charge based on the Lodge incident.

The remaining three charges were all based on incidents that occurred on Wednesday, February 10. On Sunday, February 7 the invasion of Laos by South Vietnamese troops aided by Americans was announced. A rally at the University that night to protest the invasion demanded that the University end its complicity in the war, which, in this case, translates in part as "nothing [should be allowed] on campus that can be connected with the war." After the rally, about one hundred windows on campus were broken. On Monday and Tuesday following the

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invasion the campus was in an uproar. The central demand of the radicals was to close down the Computation Center where, it was said, a war-related program was being run off. This gave the radicals an opportunity to capitalize on the University's alleged complicity in the war.

On the evening of February 9, a meeting dominated by members of Venceremos was held in Dinkelspiel Auditorium. During this meeting, a number of speakers talked about the desirability of "shutting down" the Computation Center, which was a symbol of Stanford's alleged complicity in the war. Although some speakers favored off-campus activity, Franklin lent his prestige to those who wished to "take some very effective action here on the University." The meeting closed with a consensus in favor of shutting down the Computation Center; this was to take place after a noon rally the next day to muster support for the tactic.

The activity of the following day, Wednesday, February 10, began with the noon rally in White Plaza (Stanford's Hyde Park). This rally gave rise to the second charge against Franklin. The Board held unanimously that Franklin had incited students and others forcibly to shut down the Computation Center. This finding focused on a speech that Franklin made during the White Plaza rally immediately after which the crowd moved over to the Computation Center. He ended this speech by saying:

> See, now, what we're asking is for people to make that little tiny gesture to show that we're willing to inconvenience ourselves a little bit and to begin to shut down the most obvious machinery of war, such as, and I think it is a good target, that Computation Center. [Applause and shouts of "Right on. . . ."]

The Board concluded that this speech had had a significant effect in moving the crowd to shut down the Computation Center. The Board found that Franklin's use of the words "strike" and "shut down" in his speeches was not intended to carry the normal meaning of those terms, as they are used in labor relations. Rather, they unanimously found that his use of the word "strike" was "disingenuous" and that he used the labor context "as a flag in which to wrap a much broader range of conduct." The Board concluded that Franklin "must reasonably have expected that his advocacy of 'shut down' would be interpreted by at least a substantial portion of the audience as calling for forceful disruption of the operation of the Center."

The third charge against Franklin was that he had incited the crowd to disregard a police order to disperse after the police had been summoned. When the White Plaza crowd had moved over to the Computation Center, the building was closed by the University administration. The demonstrators broke into the building and turned off the power for the IBM 360 computer, interrupting the work that was being done for University departments, the Stanford Hospital, and the many individuals whose research depends on the computer. The police were called and the building was cleared. A large crowd milled around outside the building and eventually the police ordered it to disperse. Franklin, who had not entered the building, urged the crowd which had started to disband to disregard the police dispersal order; part of the crowd failed to disperse; when the inevitable police charge came, several persons were injured and four were arrested. The Board held 5-2, with Professors Kennedy and Brown dissenting, that Franklin had incited the crowd to disregard the police order to disperse, knowing that he was substantially increasing the risk that injuries would occur.

The fourth charge concerned a speech given by Franklin during a rally held in the Old Union courtyard at 8 P.M. that night. Franklin made two speeches during the rally. In his first speech, he argued against a group of students who wished to limit the demands the demonstrators were discussing to "get the United States out of Vietnam." He argued that it was important that the demands should include something concerning what was happening on the Stanford campus. His view prevailed. In his second speech, which formed the basis for the fourth charge, he urged the crowd to wage a "people's war" against the "occupation army" of the police on the campus. He said that those at the rally should go back to the dorms, should organize into small groups, and should do their own thing, whatever they thought should be done, and to do it as late at night as possible. Although the Advisory Board declined to hear testimony on the events following Franklin's speech, they held, again 5-2, with Professors Kennedy and Brown dissenting, that by his speech Franklin had incited students and others to perform acts of violence. In fact, a number of students hostile to Franklin were beaten up nearby right after the speech. Later in the evening, there were a number of windows broken, several instances of fires being started, and two young men were wounded by gunfire.

The two dissenters were not in strong disagreement with their colleagues; as to the factual situation regarding the third charge, they "find the call a close one either way"; as to the fourth charge, their view of the facts was, they conceded, "a little less plausible than those favored by the majority, but only a little less." To assume that the findings were not justly and honestly arrived at would require a really elaborate conspiracy theory, a theory that would have to include the two Board members who dissented on two of the charges.

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IV

THE findings, including the unanimous finding on Franklin's speech at the White Plaza rally immediately before the closing down of the Computation Center, are probably not so important to the issues of academic freedom that have been raised about the Franklin case as are the Board's statement on "Fundamental Issues and Standards" and its "Discussion of Sanctions," which must be read together and which were unanimous.

The Board first deals with the general rules of University law relating to the conduct charged against Franklin. The Board identifies two sources of such law: first, the written law, including the *Tenure Statement* and the *Policy on Campus Disruptions;* second, the largely unwritten law governing the conduct of a faculty member, which the Board describes as "a web of largely unwritten rules as tough and living as the British constitution." The Board expresses a preference for largely unwritten laws, on the ground that written rules can cut against the values protected by the constitutional guarantees of free speech. While the Board preferred unwritten rules, they found in the University's written rules an expression covering the key conduct involved in the Franklin case. The *Policy on Campus Disruptions* specifically proscribes conduct

> a. to prevent or disrupt the effective carrying out of a University function or approved activity such as lectures, meetings [and] public events. . . .
>
> b. to obstruct the legitimate movement of any person about the campus or in any University building or facility.

The Board asks whether the University would be powerless to take action against a faculty member in the absence of such a written policy. They answer "no," asserting that if there were no such written policy "the common understandings of appropriate faculty conduct" would be sufficient. The fact that nowhere in *Campus Disruptions* was the term "incitement" used does not prevent the University from forbidding "incitement" to conduct that the University has made illegal.

They next proceed to a close discussion of "incitement," which they define as intentional advocacy of conduct which the University has made illegal and which the actor knows increases the risk that such conduct will occur, relying on *Brandenburg* v. *Ohio*—the most expansive interpretation of the First Amendment advanced by the Warren Court (1969)—which said that punishable advocacy must be "directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action . . . and likely to produce such action." In following *Brandenburg* the Board stated:

> We believe the university's prohibition of incitement, given the criteria of intent, risk, and imminence discussed above, is fully justified when speech threatens two central university interests: (1) protection of members of the university community and university facilities against risks of serious injury or damage; (2) protection against coercive intrusion on the intellectual transactions which the university seeks to foster.

The Board said: "We do . . . see every reason for taking care that the standard for incitement is carefully drawn, with due cognizance of those First Amendment protections that apply to the relation between state and citizen." Thus they affirmed the necessity for preserving freedom of speech on the campus and for being very cautious about protecting the individual's right to express his dissenting views.

Although there was disagreement about the sanction in the Franklin case, the Board was unanimous in stating, in balancing the rights of the individual faculty member, the rights of the other members of the academic community, and the rights of the institution:

> While it is the consensus within the university that it should have room for the widest possible range of perceptions and expression, the university says in fact to its members: "You may preach and also practice . . . but only up to a certain point."
>
> The latter edict is not aimed exclusively at those on the far political left, who often complain that they are the only ones being discriminated against when told that a theoretical espousal of their position is permitted so long as it does not spill over into action. It is also applied at many other points along the socio-politico-economic spectrum within the academic community. For instance, the university protects the right of a professor to espouse views that suggest a demeaning relationship between racial background and intelligence, but it would not permit him to organize a forcible attempt to prevent the Admissions Office from accepting black applicants. It would allow a fascist professor to advocate abolition of democratic processes, but would not let him interfere with the conduct of university exercises dedicated toward the exposition of democratic institutions. Common to these examples is the institutional decision that while those further toward the center of the political spectrum may practice what they preach, those at its extremes may preach but are limited in their practice. From Professor Franklin's viewpoint, this is an unfair asymmetry. The majority of the comunity would point out that in any even-handed balancing of rights, the encouragement of violence constitutes an infringement; to Professor Franklin the balancing of rights appears insufficiently global. Because he makes the need for incitement a political credo, a prosecution for the advocacy of imminent lawless action becomes to him a political persecution.
>
> These descriptions do not solve the problem; they only help to identify it. We cannot simul-

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taneously rededicate the university to a specific political goal—by using force or violence if necessary—and at the same time preserve it as an institution in which independent initiative from many quarters can have the widest possible play. A choice must be made and we choose the latter. Yet having made this choice, the university can contemplate punishment of action—and most especially, of speech—only when the rights claimed by the dissidents seriously infringe those of other groups or individuals within the university.

V

PERHAPS the most heavily criticized aspect of the case was the Board's decision that Franklin should be dismissed. This aspect evoked the strong dissent of Professors Kennedy and Brown, although they agreed that some sanction was called for. The majority pinned the sanction of dismissal on the concept of deterrence. They rejected retaliation on the presumably unstated ground that good utilitarians have no truck with that concept. They rejected rehabilitation on the ground that Franklin had testified that he would in any event continue to act just as he had in the past. The Board had unanimously ruled out probation and a very lengthy suspension as impracticable. A long suspension—say for two years—forces the faculty member, who must be assumed to be economically vulnerable, into "irreversible economic alternatives." The only other sanctions that deserve serious consideration are Professor Brown's suggestion of one quarter's suspension without pay and Professor Kennedy's proposal of, in effect, a half year's suspension without pay. The case for a short-term suspension was justified by Professor Brown on the ground that:

> I believe very strongly that, however much I and many of my colleagues may disagree with what Professor Franklin says or how he says it, Stanford University will be less a true university without him and more of a true university with him. I fear that we may do untold harm to ourselves and to the cause of higher education unless by imposing a penalty short of dismissal, we seek to keep him as a very uncomfortable but very important part of what this University, or any university, is meant to be.

The majority of the Board had to weigh that consideration against the damage that Franklin had caused to the institution and the damage that would presumably be caused by his reinstatement and his continued role in inciting students to use violence and coercion against the institution. As the majority said: "Tolerance of such attacks on the freedom of others, under the guise of protecting Professor Franklin's freedom to act as he wishes, would be subversion, not support, of true academic freedom and individual rights."

It may be interesting that Franklin's reaction on learning of the decision was, in answering a question, that violence was the only appropriate response. He went on to say that if he were a student he would "join with two or three of my friends and I would go into Sandy Dornbusch's class and disrupt that class." He advocated disrupting the classes of all Advisory Board members who voted for his dismissal.

VI

SINCE the decision, a number of dissenting views have been expressed. A group of faculty members called the Faculty Political Action Group (FPAG) has asserted at various times that the Advisory Board has no jurisdiction, that it is a tool of the administration, and that nothing should be punished on campus other than the commission of crime. That last view seems untenable: for if the University is barred from relying on its own policies, duly adopted and ratified, then it has automatically rendered itself incapable of enforcing discipline in large areas of conduct. Plagiarism, discriminating in grades against a student because of race, failure to show up for classes are all examples of the untenability of the FPAG view. The best response to the FPAG argument is the Board's statement: "It is inappropriate to tie tenure proceedings to the criminal process" since a criminal proceeding may take several years to resolve and it may terminate favorably to the accused "for reasons which have nothing to do with a faculty member's fitness to retain his position." And they observed that the vagaries of the criminal process did not reflect "a sensitive judgment of university interests as a central concern." The FPAG view amounts to saying that faculty members are privileged to do anything at all with impunity; this strikes me as a manifestation of the very elitism that its proponents habitually denounce within the University.

A possibly more serious criticism is the one expressed by Alan Dershowitz in various forums since the decision was announced. Mr. Dershowitz is on the faculty at Harvard Law School and is a visitor this year not to Stanford but to the adjacent think-tank (Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences). He has asserted that the decision "will clearly have a chilling and deterrent effect on what professors think they can say to mass audiences in situations that may be inflammatory. In general, it's going to make professors think twice before speaking out. For Stanford, that could be a disaster because they aren't accustomed to speaking out anyway." One person commented that Dershowitz "has been sent from Harvard to save us from sin."

Mr. Dershowitz's criticism is based on a prediction of how people will react to the decision. Mr.

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Dershowitz is well known professionally for his skepticism, which I share, about predictions of anti-social behavior, as, for example, in laws regarding preventive detention. That kind of skepticism seems equally appropriate to his prediction about the consequences of the Franklin decision. The greatest danger of a "chilling and deterrent effect" comes from people who fail to consider the Advisory Board's careful emphasis on plainly punishable incitement to immediate illegal conduct and who see in the Franklin case only a reflection of their own fearful fantasies.

As for the future of free speech at Stanford, Mr. Dershowitz should rest easy. Even a casual reading of the guest columns in the Stanford *Daily* in the weeks that have elapsed since the decision was announced reveals that expressions of dissent at Stanford have flourished. A number of faculty members have made White Plaza orations, fomenting if not inciting further disruptions.

It must be elsewhere than Stanford that Mr. Dershowitz looks to validate his prediction. Where it is I have no idea. President Lyman responded to the point that institutions other than Stanford might suffer from the decision:

> . . . the most useful thing that we can do is to follow our own policies, as they were thoughtfully (albeit not perfectly) framed before this case ever arose, and set a decent example of seeking a sound judgment based on these policies.

The only effect that the decision could conceivably have would be to make faculty members think a bit before they encourage their students to use coercion and violence. I see no conflict between that and what the American Association of University Professors said in late 1970:

> Because academic freedom has traditionally included the instructor's full freedom as a citizen, most faculty members face no insoluble conflicts between the claims of politics, social action, and conscience, on the one hand, and the claims and expectation of their students, colleagues, and institutions, on the other. If such conflicts become acute, and the instructor's attention to his obligations as a citizen and moral agent precludes the fulfillment of substantial academic obligations, he cannot escape the responsibility of that choice, but should either request a leave of absence or resign his academic position.

. . . . . .

> [T]*here is a need for the faculty to assume a more positive role as guardian of academic values against unjustified assaults from its own members.* The traditional faculty function in disciplinary proceedings has been to assure academic due process and meaningful faculty participation in the imposition of discipline by the administration. While this function should be maintained, faculties should recognize their stake in promoting adherence to norms essential to the academic enterprise. (Emphasis added.)

The Franklin era at Stanford is over. The apologist for violence at the University is gone, and it is to be hoped that the mob has disappeared also. The memory of that era, with its trashing, its arson, and its physical injury will remain in the minds of Stanford faculty members. One would not want to wish those memories on the minds of people who did not experience the pain of those years. However, the Franklin era was one that people everywhere should abhor.

Academic freedom is alive and well at Stanford. One form of intimidation has been ruled out. There is now an insistence on rational discourse. Free inquiry and the other values of academic life have been affirmed. The price of freedom at Stanford, as at other universities, continues to be a constant questioning of premises, free from coercion and violence.

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"Relevant" Shakespeare

Jack Richardson

In the jargon of our time, the word "relevant" has taken on a polemical connotation. In the cultural hagglings between those who idolize the present and themselves in it and those whose egos are coerced by tradition into modesty, relevance is almost always the line on which the battle is fixed. The relevantists indeed believe that art is long, life short, and accommodation between the two often not worth the trouble unless some vivid parallel or analogy can be struck between their own notion of the contemporary world and the art that preceded it. This doctrine may at first seem excessively self-centered, but it is really in principle harmless. If the mind expounding it is generous, then, in spite of itself, very little of past thought and passion will be alien to it. It is only when one hears of Dante's failing to meet the standards set by post-pubescent identity crises or of Plato's induction into the Third-World movement, that the relevantist doctrine seems absurdly narrow.

Shakespeare, as one of the first principles of our culture, is, and has always been, a relevantist's target. While he has hardly ever been accused of having a diminished significance for the ages that succeeded him, his fate has always been, nonetheless, tied to fashion. In a lifetime of theater-going, one can see his works done in manners which will include *The Tempest* as a study in the effects of imperialism, *Romeo and Juliet* as a mirror for race relations and the generation gap, *Hamlet* played by a woman in a production designed to point out the decadence of the class system, and, several times at least, a *Julius Caesar* that will hint broadly at contemporary political analogues. Also, though this follows less from the philosophy of relevance than from theatrical expediency, it is safe to say that no matter how many times one sees a particular play by Shakespeare, one will never hear the same text twice. To be sure, this has more than a little to do with the vagaries of Elizabethan transcription, but it is equally true that emendations are often made by directors confounded by a sub-plot or seduced by an aesthetic that disallows some part of Shakespeare's dramaturgy or diction.

Only a Bard fanatic would argue that no liberties should be taken with any of our first poet's plays. However, Shakespeare-tampering is a dangerous enterprise, and one should be aware that, like Coleridge, who could not believe Shakespeare capable of writing something so imagistically rude as the Porter's scene in *Macbeth*, one risks exposing the limits of one's age rather than the limits of Shakespeare's genius through excessive editing or tendentiously timely interpretations of his plays.

Joseph Papp, who started the Shakespeare Festival in Central Park and who has since gone on to found the Public Theater and the Mobile Theater in a laudable effort to bring live drama to a larger audience than ordinary commercial channels can reach, is a loving relevantist where Shakespeare is concerned. On the one hand, he is not afraid to gut the text completely, as he did a few years ago with *Hamlet*, and in the name of contemporaneity to refurbish plots and poetry with items he believes will stir the imagination of the public he wishes to reach. But he does this, as he has said on many occasions, not because time has dulled the poet's vitality, but because, to him, Shakespeare is the most contemporary and relevant of all past dramatists, and therefore can easily accommodate modern dress, manners, and attitudes. A nice diplomatic piece of propitiation, perhaps, but I honestly believe from what I've seen of Mr. Papp's work that he believes Shakespeare to be an artist of such universality that nothing, from the most phlegmatic performance to the most perversely antic interpretation, can fatally injure him. Apart from the idolatry in this notion, there is something seriously wrong with its logic, for if Shakespeare is a dramatist of such contemporary spirit, then what need is there for all the outward adjustments? Why add to perfection?

But then logic has never been much esteemed in the theater, and what Mr. Papp probably means when he says Shakespeare is contemporary is something like the following: Shakespeare is unquestionably a great artist and the emotions he depicts are common to us all; however, in order to make it evident to a random audience of today that it and Shakespeare share common ground, it is necessary that the audience not be discomforted by too much linguistic complexity or too little theatrical activity.

And if the above argument is not readily accepted, then, as all defenders of a modernized Shakespeare do, Mr. Papp, I'm certain, would remind us that Shakespeare's own company, when putting on his plays, showed something less than a reverence for historical accuracy. Didn't Roman emperors and pre-Norman kings walk about the boards dressed anachronistically in doublets, jerkins, and compintanks? One might say that the tradition of modernized Shakespeare began with the updating Shakespeare himself did.

The argument, of course, can never be resolved. All one can say is that the burden of proof must lie with those who would interpret Shakespeare to their advantage.

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W. H. Auden once counted it a misfortune that, because of Shakespeare's position in our literature, we encounter him first either in the study or the schoolroom, and therefore we are not guileless spectators when we first see him acted on the stage. On the other hand, given the incomprehensibility of so many Shakespeare productions, it might be an equal misfortune to come to them unattended by any solitary preparation. In the end, there will always be two Shakespeares: the leisurely one of the reading room, where each thought and image can be mused upon and where all partakes of the wonder of pure imagination, and the theatrical one, where for the incarnation of imagined deeds and characters one sometimes must pay the price of seeing imagination made all too finite. These two Shakespeares are never coextensive, but one hopes as one goes forth each time to the theater that they will prove complementary.

ABOUT *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a production which the program notes tell us Mr. Papp "joyfully" presents, it is nice to say that, despite all the reservations I have about the way he has offered us Shakespeare in the past, this time he seems to have hit upon a happy compromise between his mission to involve his audience and his desire to edify it. By removing at least three-quarters of the text, adding music by Galt MacDermot, the composer of *Hair*, allowing the vernacular of the multi-national and multi-racial cast to slip in and out of the dialogue, and announcing flatly that this production is "based" on a play by William Shakespeare, Papp puts himself beyond criticism in terms of strict Shakespearean theater and is free to be as relevant as he wants. The result may not be an unqualified success, but it is a wonderfully spirited presentation that, for all its absurdities, catches at times the essence of Shakespeare's rougher comic moments. The acting, with one notable exception, is clumsy and obvious, the music is a commonplace pastiche of pop styles, and Mel Shapiro's direction proves that he hasn't yet learned the difference between a good comic gim-

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mick and one that, although it elicits a giggle or two, isn't worth all the trouble it demands—I am thinking of the bicycle Valentine rides that is festooned with baroque gold-leaf and the absurd voice Thurio employs throughout the play. And yet, in the end, one cannot help but share in Papp's joy over this mixture of modern manners and 16th-century comedy. There is something affecting about seeing love's excesses subjected to both Renaissance and rock sportiveness, and there is extra pleasure in the notion that we are still close enough to these passions to make fun of them on our own terms.

I should point out here that the fact that Proteus and Julia are played by Puerto Rican actors, and that Valentine and Silvia have black representatives on stage, is used to good comic advantage, with the former often punctuating their more involved speeches with some Latin pungency and the latter bringing their passions down to earth via an occasional warm street idiom or two. However, Silvia's being black did produce some oddities, as when Proteus praises her beauty by saying: "And Silvia —witness heaven that made her fair!—Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiope"; or when Valentine anticipates his creator by quoting a sonnet he had not yet written and, brooding over his love for Silvia, speaks, "My love is as a fever, longing still/For that which longer nurseth the disease;/Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill./ The uncertain sickly appetite to please." Although Valentine goes on for several more lines he does not finish the sonnet, but those who know it do, and the last couplet—"For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,/ Who art as black as hell, as dark as night"—creates an odd image to be floating in an audience's mind while watching a comedy with a black heroine.

A HODGEPODGE? Certainly. Simpleminded? That too. But *Two Gentlemen of Verona* succeeds in bringing out laughter, sometimes in ways that Shakespeare intended, sometimes at the difficulties his and our worlds have in coming to a theatrical understanding, and sometimes at those of us who think that Shakespeare has been left to our safekeeping and that without continuous vigilance the vulgar will lay hold of him and change him into a likeness of themselves.

Besides the laughter, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* has the exception to my general feeling about the acting to recommend it. Raul Julia in the role of Proteus gives the only performance in the play that easily bridges both worlds depicted in it. He is both cool and outlandish, creating his comedy with expansive ease and understatement, making Proteus an intelligent fool and a lovable traitor. Moreover, he was the only actor on stage who seemed to catch and enjoy the wit in those lines of Shakespeare the adaptor allowed to remain, and thus was able to preserve, within a riot of low comic styles, a moment or two of elegant humor.

FAR removed from relevance of any sort is Roman Polanski's film version of *Macbeth*. I had intended to spend most of my allotted space discussing this film, but that was until I saw it. If one is interested in seeing several studies of Scottish mists, a dozen panoramas of moors and mountains, a castle or two, and every form of butchery of which the sword, mace, crossbow, and knife are capable, then one will find this a bountiful presentation. If, on the other hand, one has some curiosity about the play that occasioned all this artful photography, one had best stay at home. For somehow the play has vanished from Polanski's and Kenneth Tynan's version of *Macbeth*, and by vanished I don't mean that a successful transition has been made from the fixed limits of the theater to the larger boundaries of film. Nor do I mean that Polanski and Tynan have been overzealous in trimming the text. It is not so much what was done that is at fault as what was left undone. Certainly Polanski might have taken time out from working on his sanguinary tableaux to try to coax something like a performance from his principal actors, something that aspired to more than a clear and dutiful reading of their lines. Of course, since this was a film, I suppose everyone was being especially careful to guard against any theatrical flamboyance creeping into the frames and destroying their carefully researched realism. However, by having Lord and Lady Macbeth scurrying around endless castle corridors, their minds buzzing with voice-over monologues broken only by an occasional exchange of conspiratorial whispers, our film-makers have given up the concise articulations of tragedy and substituted for them little more than long, disjointed whinings.

Also, though I am no votary of the *étonne-moi* aesthetic, I do expect to be surprised by *something* in a new production of Shakespeare. It is indeed seldom that one is not astonished, pleasantly or otherwise, by the interpretation of a scene or an actor's way of coloring a line when one of Shakespeare's major works is done, and it is this astonishment that keeps us coming back again and again to learn from the theater. In this film, however, with the exception of a nice twist to Banquo's murder scene, and a dubiously fatalistic reading of Lady Macbeth's lines, "We fail?/But screw your courage to the sticking-place./And we'll not fail," which seems inconsistent with her feverish, unrealistic visions of future glory, there is nothing that the actor or director gives one that the most literal-minded student of the play, buttressed by a budget of several million dollars, could not devise.

Several million dollars! It is appalling to think of so much being spent to produce such a stale version of Macbeth's undoing. I think how long such a sum could keep Mr. Papp and his relevance in good spirits, how many more *Two Gentlemen of Verona*s he could give us. I think of this not without mixed feelings, of course, but at least Papp has never been able to obliterate Shakespeare completely. Perhaps it takes millions of dollars to do this, so that, in the end, it is better to constrain Shakespeare productions with small budgets in order to insure that there will at least be the virtue of modesty in their failures.

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Books in Review

Ordure out of Chaos

VOYEUR VOYANT. A PORTRAIT OF LOUIS-FERDINAND CELINE. By ERIKA OSTROVSKY. *Random House. 398 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by RENEE WINEGARTEN

THE year before his death in 1961 Céline claimed one achievement: it was to have succeeded in getting everybody to agree that "I'm the biggest bastard alive!" The word moderately translated as "bastard" in Erika Ostrovsky's sympathetic biography, the first in English, evokes filth and excrement *(ordure)*, but then Céline's paranoid scatalogical slangy verve is often virtually untranslatable. He was exaggerating as usual, for he has had his apologists, among them the late Roger Nimier who, with characteristic effrontery, gaily suggested him as candidate for the Nobel prize. However, if many thought ill of Céline, it must be admitted that he had long worked masochistically to achieve that end.

See what a mangy cur I am, Céline proposes, but nobody else is any better, so why am I singled out for all the kicks? Some famous literary lights who were wining and dining with the Germans during the Occupation have become respected members of the Académie Francaise, he complains. Others had their works performed with German authorization, like the ungrateful Sartre who took from Céline's only play the epigraph of *The Diary of Antoine Roquentin*. But Sartre, whom he scurrilously satirizes under the name of Tartre, had ventured repeatedly to accuse him of being in the pay of the Nazis. Céline did not like it when others wielded the weapon of bilious rancor with which he himself laid about so frequently.

The difficulty about writing a biography or "portrait" of Céline is that his own novels are largely autobiographical, neither quite fictitious nor quite "real," and his manner inimitable. He soon gave up the pretense that his narrator was anyone but himself, Louis-Ferdinand Destouches, the son of squabbling Parisian lower-middle-class parents (his father worked for an insurance company while his mother kept a lace shop). The struggling if mean-minded poor are for him eternal victims of the selfish rich, a view that for a brief while endeared him to the Left. The sight of his mother on her knees offering her lace samples to a wealthy bourgeois couple who quietly filched a handkerchief would surely have been enough to mark him for life. His progress from the complete nihilism of his first and best book, *Journey to the End of Night* (1932), to sympathy with the radical Right, offers a typical French case-history of the first half of the century.

Educated in Germany and England in preparation for a commercial career, he enlisted in the army in 1912. In Flanders in 1914 he was severely wounded on a dangerous mission for which he had volunteered, and was awarded the Military Medal. No longer fit for military service, he went out to the Cameroons and disliked what he saw of colonial exploitation. He studied medicine, became a doctor, but despite his medical training and his wide travels (he visited the Soviet Union and the United States) he remained narrowly opinionated, with a readiness to swallow extreme theories of impending disaster and doom, and a scorn of "intellectualism" and ideas.

His experience of the horrors of World War I made him determined to oppose "apocalyptic crusades" while encouraging his nostalgia for apocalypse. So in the 30's he favored a Franco-German alliance, and without being a member of any of the fascist groups, he adopted a racialism of the Hitlerian stamp (belief in the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, in selective breeding to protect the white race, in the Jews as a principle of decadence, in the black peril and the yellow peril).

The last year of World War II found him in Germany, whose defeat he foresaw, and where he could gratify his apocalyptic leanings to the full. His final trilogy of novels includes a nightmarish picture of the last days of the Vichy government and its supporters at Sigmaringen, where he served as doctor. One of the most remarkable scenes is a wildly grotesque encounter between Laval and Céline, in which the former recalls that the novelist (who disliked the politician's "racial type") had called him a Jew and a traitor.

Did this interview take place, or did it take place in the form described in the novel? Who knows? How to distinguish between Céline's powerful vision, at once lucid and hallucinatory, and the mere prosaic facts? Erika Ostrovsky (who has already published a critical study of Céline) takes as epigraph the novelist's own words: "A biography . . . is something one invents." While consulting his relatives and friends she has adopted a Célinesque novelistic approach, moving back and forth in time, almost as if wishing to add another volume to the canon. It would appear from the blurb (for there is no explanatory preface) that she feels an author as anarchistic as Céline should not be treated in the usual straightforward manner. Yet few writers more urgently require cool and dispassionate as-

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RENEE WINEGARTEN *writes regularly in these pages on French literature. Her article, "Malraux's Fate," appeared in our November 1971 number.*

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sessment and portrayal, although few have made such an aim more difficult to achieve.

For Céline does what he always intended to do: he sticks in one's throat like a sharp bone. He presents the insufferable and insoluble challenge of the modern split between literary talent of a high order and humane values. As supposedly sophisticated students of literature we do not know what to do about this because—since Stendhal and Baudelaire—we have been brought up to believe that true art is only concerned with authenticity, integrity, risk, *regardless* of where these may lead: drugs, crime, suicide, the ruin of others or of oneself or both, the worse the better.

The further they lead—to self-destruction or universal abomination—the greater the proof of the writer's authenticity and artistic martyrdom. Céline gives voice to this romantic quest when he says: "That is perhaps what one is seeking throughout life, nothing but that, the greatest possible affliction so as to become oneself before death." It is time we recognized this kind of romanticism for the *trompe-l'oeil* it is, but we are still dazzled by the heroic element of desperate self-immolation for the sake of self-realization.

To TRY to find out why the author of *Death on the Installment Plan* produced his virulent anti-Semitic lucubrations does not take one far. Perhaps he imbibed anti-Semitism from his father, who can be found railing against Jews and Freemasons. At different times he put forward various reasons—that his mistress, an American dancer, had been destroyed by a Jewish judge; that his book attacking Communism after a visit to the Soviet Union aroused the enmity of Communists and Jews and lost him his job in a clinic; and so on. In his book on Action Francaise, Eugen Weber suggests it arose because the doctor's ballet was turned down by Jean Zay, a Jew who was Minister of Education in the Popular Front government. Céline was of a medieval turn of mind: he needed a principle of evil so as to be able to justify his ferocious indignation and to conjure his own panic at the state of the modern world.

It is a misnomer to qualify as a pamphlet that vast tome, *Bagatelles pour un massacre,* published in 1937. Léon Daudet, no mean anti-Semitic polemicist himself, wrote encouragingly in 1938, ". . . this book is AN ACT." The painter Vlaminck cried in horror, "It's a pogrom!!" and called it an invitation to another Saint Bartholomew's massacre. Not content with this work and others of a similar nature, Céline wrote an article in which he actively encouraged persecution during the Occupation, at a time when he himself was being constantly quoted and lauded in the press.

One man of letters in 1938 had the temerity to suggest that *Bagatelles* could not be evaluated without leaving aside its meaning, and after doing so concluded that it was a masterpiece. A more recent admirer, Dominique de Roux, writing in 1968, maintained that Céline did not mean it; that "so infinitely tender a sensibility would never have permitted the slightest hint of racial persecution"; that, on the contrary, the novelist himself, because of his postwar sufferings, was the Jew, the scapegoat —a view that is gaining currency. If all those who regard themselves as the unique victims of inexplicable hatred, as Céline did, are to be so defined, then the term will become ever more elastic and meaningless.

Certainly, Céline's outraged and outrageous cries of protest against the horrors of war, against exploitation, against the family and all existing sacrosanct flags and respectable ideals, make the black humor of his heirs, Joseph Heller, Bruce Jay Friedman, or Philip Roth, appear as so much cold tea. There is no denying the potency of the original death-haunted model.

But what he supremely lacks is the sense of human worth. With rare exceptions, like the loving American prostitute Molly who makes him ashamed of having judged humanity lower than it is, man is garbage, a bag of rottenness waiting for death. "I hadn't got the great human idea myself," says Ferdinand-Bardamu, always inclined to feel more sorry for animals than men. This attitude goes much further than a doctor's lucid awareness of the human condition. It has something in common with the horror, loathing, and terror of a grinning medieval dance of death as in their greed, bestiality, and folly, all go helter-skelter into the maw of the Beast. Céline cannot stop rejoicing as well as shuddering at the apocalyptic vision of the approaching end.

For him, writing is flux, a form of excretion. If he sometimes insists that his vocation is medicine, not literature, at other times he calls medicine "excrement" too. He longs to get to the end of everything, including the word: perhaps when everything has been said, there will be peace, he suggests wearily. As Erika Ostrovsky points out, he uttered a warning against the hidden danger of words and then failed to weigh his own words and follow his own advice.

The power of Céline's word often casts a fatal spell on those who write about him. Erika Ostrovsky is no exception, sometimes even imitating the master's disjointed elliptic sentences and celebrated three dots. Of his first wife she writes in a manner presumably intended to evoke the novelist's strained eroticism, but more reminiscent of a less exalted popular American model. ("A rush of hot flesh rocked her, then swiftly ebbed away. Each thrust combined with the threat of sudden escape.") However, once past the lush account of Céline's inclination for sex *à trois,* preferably with lesbians, with its suggestion of impotence, the book grows less eccentric.

The author tries to be scrupulously fair in presenting the evidence for Céline's complexity and contradictions. It is scarcely her fault if she cannot counter the monotony of the endless moan of the writings of his last years. What one misses is the detailed placing of the novelist in the social, intellectual, and historical context of his day, without which he seems to move in a vacuum. There is nothing like Céline's extreme decadent romanticism to make one long for a return to rigor and measure.

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Image Voting

THE TICKET-SPLITTER: A NEW FORCE IN AMERICAN POLITICS. By WALTER DEVRIES AND LANCE TARRANCE, JR. *Eerdmans. 149 pp. $4.95.*

Reviewed by ANDREW M. GREELEY

TRENDS are news and continuity is not. Thus, even though there is far more stability than change in any polity, it is change and rumors of change which capture the headlines.

We hear about political change —realignments, new coalitions, "twenty-five million new voters," new issues, new politics. The perhaps dreary truth is that there is relatively little change in American voting patterns and political behavior. Survey Research Center data indicate that between 1952 and 1970 the "independents" have picked up nine percentage points—three of them at the expense of the "don't knows," two from the Republicans, and four from the Democrats. Gallup evidence shows that the net "independent" gain in the last decade has been four percentage points. Hardly a revolutionary social change.

There is no evidence that the new voters are much different from their parents, or that the old New Deal coalition is no longer the effective majority most of the time, or that the "ethnics" are being won away from the Democratic party by Kevin Phillips. And if there be any realignment at all, it is that regional realignment isolated by my colleagues Norman Nie and David Greenstone: since 1960, the South has become predictably non-Democratic in Presidential elections and the Northeast has become predictably Democratic.

But Walter DeVries and Lance Tarrance, Jr. have apparently pinpointed a change which exists in the real world apart from the "Op-Ed" page of the New York *Times*. If party identification has not changed much, "ticket-splitting" has. In 1944 there were 41 Congressional districts which voted for one party for the Presidency and another for the House of Representatives. In 1956 there were 130 such districts; in 1964, 145; and in 1968, 139. Some of this "splitting" can undoubtedly be explained by the regional realignment which Nie and Greenstone have documented. In the last decade and a half, the South has developed a pattern of sending Democrats to Congress and voting for non-Democrats for the Presidency. DeVries and Tarrance have not taken this factor into account and hence their argument for an increase in "ticket-splitting" as evidence of political change is somewhat weakened.

BUT there is enough evidence of "ticket-splitting" between Gubernatorial and Senatorial candidates to establish their case. From 1914 to 1962 there was only one year when there were more than six states which elected a Senator from one party and a Governor from another (1940, when there were eleven such "incongruences"). Since 1962 the average number of "incongruences" has been eleven per year; and the states in which the ticket-splitting occurred were frequently important ones. In 1970, for example, "incongruences" occurred in California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. The ticket-splitter is becoming part of the political environment.

DeVries and Tarrance are delighted, particularly because they have managed the effective "ticket-splitter" strategy of the Michigan Republican party. They point out that the "ticket-splitter" is not the "independent" described by Angus Campbell and his colleagues from the Survey Research Center—a voter without conviction or commitment. Rather, the "ticket-splitter" is both more concerned and better informed than the straight party voter. He is more likely to be young, professional, college-educated, and to have an income over $10,000. He is part of America's post-World War II college-educated professional class.

ANDREW M. GREELEY *is director of the Center for the Study of American Pluralism at the University of Chicago and the author of* Why Can't They Be Like Us? America's White Ethnic Groups (*Dutton*).

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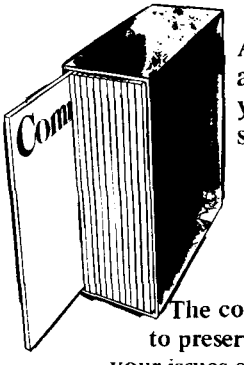

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So far so good; perhaps we do indeed have a more mature and sophisticated electorate. But then the authors tell us how the ticket-splitters make their choice. They are not concerned so much about the old-fashioned things like group loyalties and party identification. That may be reasonable enough, though one becomes uneasy. The differences among groups and between parties are real. If one ignores them, one is ignoring an extremely important aspect of American life. It further develops that the ticket-splitters are more concerned about the candidates' "personality," their "ability to handle issues," and their "stands on issues." This makes one even more uneasy; how do potential ticket-splitters know the personality of the candidate? How do they judge his ability with issues?

When we learn what the "very important" factors are in the ticket-splitters' decisions, our worst fears are confirmed. The ticket-splitters are most likely to be influenced by TV newscasts, documentaries, editorials, and talk shows, and by newspaper editorials and stories. What we are dealing with is one-dimensional man, a character who looks neither to his gut (as does the poor man) nor to his head (as does the sophisticated man) for guidance on how to vote but to the models of reality served up by the mass media. The ticket-splitter is provided with his world view by NBC and Time, Inc.

IT SEEMS incredible that anyone would take seriously the shallow analyses of newspaper and television editorials as a voting guide. It seems even more incredible that a two-minute spot on the eleven-o'clock news could be thought of as providing any more than a horrendously oversimplified description of an election issue. It is beyond belief that the incompetent hacks who write most of the local political columns in the American press can win acceptance as responsible analysts of the political scene. It may be less incredible but it is still profoundly disturbing to discover that there is a segment of American society which believes that the real world is like the one portrayed on the national newscasts or described in the pages of the New York-dominated national journals.

Both the sophisticated and the poor are profoundly suspicious of the media, the former because they know reality is more complex and the latter because the media analysts are identified with "them" (or, to use the media's own term, "the Establishment"). It is precisely the half-educated who are likely to be influenced by what they see on the tube and read in the newspapers; and, unfortunately, a college degree is just about what it takes to be half-educated.

The old theories of "mass society" and "merchandising candidates" have been stood on their heads. It is precisely not the poor and the uneducated who can be swayed by the media. It is, rather, the upper-middle class who are most likely to look to David Brinkley or *Newsweek* for guidance (other recent research confirms the argument of DeVries and Tarrance: the moderately well-educated are the ones most likely to change their minds when the media models of reality change). A sophisticated TV campaign won't swing the working man away from his loyalty to the party that takes care of his interests. You don't merchandise a papier-mâché candidate to everyone but only to the potential ticket-splitters.

The technique for getting to a ticket-splitter is neatly described:

> The Milliken television commercials were created following a "mini-documentary" or "telenews" concept, to make the commercials look like news. Each of the nine spots opened with a dramatic still photograph representing one of the state's most urgent problems. Most of these stills were in black and white accentuating the graphic starkness of the problem. The scene then dissolved from the still photograph to the governor, who in each of the nine spots was seen as demonstrating his understanding of that particular problem and addressing himself to its solution. These color segments of the governor all contained identifiable symbols of the governor's office—state seal, flag or desk. The commercial ended by dissolving to a card which read: "Milliken: A Leader You Can Trust." An announcer's voice-over editorialized in a soft-sell manner: "Think about that on November 3rd." The format: present the problem, demonstrate an understanding and ability to handle that problem, and end with a soft-sell editorial.

It is indicative of the authors' ethical sensitivities that they show no signs of thinking there might be something wrong in describing a complex social issue in a few minutes of TV time. Nor do they seem at all troubled by the thought that it might be inappropriate to pursue ticket-splitters weekly or even daily to see how they are responding to such fundamentally phony campaigning.

TICKET-SPLITTING in response to media guidance and the manipulation of ticket-splitters by corrupting campaigners are a fairly serious threat to American democracy, though probably not a fatal danger. Both the wise and the simple see through the media, though, alas, the number of the simple will decline as college education becomes more nearly universal. You cannot fool even the ticket-splitters with a "sex-appeal" candidate who has failed miserably in public office—though the history of both New York City and New York State in recent years indicates that plastic office-holders can continue to be reelected by ticket-splitters despite abject failure to cope effectively with public responsibilities, especially when the opposition party cannot put up an "attractive" alternative candidate. Nor is there any reason why Republicans like Michigan's Governor Milliken (a client of DeVries) should have a monopoly on ticket-splitting strategy.

The real problem is that a political style keyed to influencing the ticket-splitter through the media could exclude from public office candidates of intelligence, integrity, and ability simply because they lack TV presence—a presence which is not required by all voters but is required by the half-educated group which is most prone to take its cues from the media.

Though Hubert Humphrey may

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have been too closely identified with Lyndon Johnson ever to be elected President, no one questions his intelligence or competency as a public official. However, he looks bad on TV and probably always will. Is he therefore disqualified from public office? Or if the Democrats could come up with a plastic candidate who looked better than Mr. Nixon on TV (it ought not to be hard but apparently is), is Mr. Nixon to be disqualified from re-election because he has poor TV presence?

Even more pertinent is the question of Senator Muskie's much-discussed temper. The press will undoubtedly push him to the absolute limit hoping he will blow up—not out of malice but rather because blowing up is news, particularly if a Presidential candidate blows up. Then the Wise Men of the media will announce to those ticket-splitters, eagerly waiting to learn what they ought to think next, that Senator Muskie's explosion probably cost him the Presidency. The ticket-splitters will docilely vote for the other candidate because, of course, you can't have a President who loses his temper.

But why the hell not? Most American working men would be perfectly delighted with a "tough Polack" who told off a "smart-aleck" newsman. And a number of us who would not quite use those words would still think that a pyrotechnic temper (such as the late John Kennedy was also reputed to have) might be a very useful psychic safety valve in a President.

Brinkley, Smith, Cronkite, Wicker, Novak, Fritchley, Alsop, Wills, White, Drummond—all splendid and insightful men. They provide some of the best entertainment to be found in the media; and of course that's what the media are in business to do—provide entertainment. But heaven help us all if an increasing number of people are going to let such men tell them who should be President of the United States .

And then Mike Royko will be able to tell us who should be Mayor of Chicago.

Art and Ideology

THE POLITICS OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY NOVELISTS. Edited by GEORGE A. PANICHAS. *Hawthorn. 375 pp. $13.95.*

POLITICS AND FILM. By LEIF FURHAMMER and FOLKE ISAKSSON. Translated by Kersti French. *Praeger. 257 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by DAVID BROMWICH

POLITICS is relevant to art whenever the critic cares to make it relevant. At its simplest level political criticism makes no distinction between great art and poor, since its main task is documentary: tracking down a man's beliefs and inserting them at the appropriate places in his work. George Panichas's anthology shows that this has

DAVID BROMWICH, *a student at Yale, reviewed a volume of Tess Slesinger's short stories in November 1971; his article, "Reading Robert Lowell," appeared in August 1971.*

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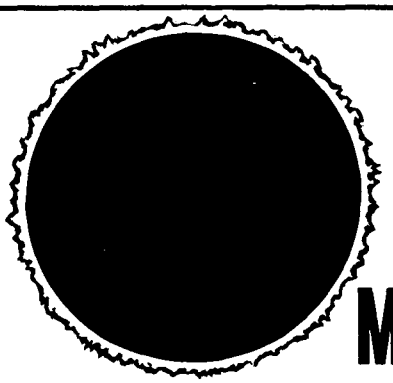

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become a popular pastime among literary scholars. Yet whatever the claims entered for it by Mr. Panichas in his Introduction, or by John Aldridge in a special Foreword, this kind of thing is not literary criticism. Mr. Aldridge confuses the whole issue by complaining vaguely about the present state of literary studies. The New Critics, he says, were never sufficiently concerned with "life," by which he means politics; at least in this particular, he announces (a little late in the day?), their influence has been baleful. Of course that is not the point at all. Criticism has in general been open to all varieties of enrichment, but the real difficulty lies in getting critics subtle enough, and clever enough, to be concerned with politics without vulgarizing it. What we need, in short, and seldom get, is a genuine political criticsm that runs deeper than the current—or the currency—of political "relevance."

Let me add right away that *The Politics of Twentieth-Century Novelists* is never an outrageous book. Mr. Panichas has ventured onto a delicate ground with the best of intentions, and his contributors to a man have avoided the reductive and the hysterical. There are intelligent things here by Bernard Bergonzi, Philip Thody, and Robert Alter, among others. Even the most sensitive of these essays, however, suffers in the end from a peculiar deadness of response, a quality perhaps attributable to the flattening effect of editorial inhibitions. Every discussion of an author proceeds biographically in the ABC fashion, as though the editor had set himself to compiling a reference book for reasonably bright high-school students. Lawrence, Bertrand Russell remarked, wrote beautiful descriptions of landscape but had ideas that could not be forgotten too soon. No doubt it was a reckless statement. Yet after reading several of the well-balanced assessments in this collection, I began to long for critics who might exhibit strong opinions of their own, however reckless. G. S. Fraser, for example, writing about the novels of C. P. Snow, and in the last degree minimizing his claims for Snow as an artist, seems to have had no earthly reason for accepting his assignment in the first place. True, one ought to adopt a tone of restraint in praising a novelist like Snow. The question remains why we must even hear about this author. Why, too, does Mr. Panichas include essays on Steinbeck, Dos Passos, and Wells, but none on Mauriac, Mann, or Sartre? Though the second group held convictions less easily and less obviously available to the documentary critic, they are surely more worth hearing about. The truth is that the less imaginative criticism of politics in the novel naturally finds its level with the less imaginative sort of writer.

SOME years ago John Harrison brought out a book called *The Reactionaries*, which dealt in turn with the social views of Lawrence, Yeats, Pound, Eliot, and Wyndham Lewis. The individual studies were constructed mainly from piles of horrifying quotations, and little was done to connect the passages so industriously culled with a broadly literary judgment of each author, though something about his manner suggested that Harrison's highest ambitions lay in that direction. At any rate the book was instructive in its very deficiencies. Most of us do believe, after all, that aberrant social views put a certain pressure on the aesthetic value of a work, but to say just where the aberrancy cuts a work off from the realm of art is in practice impossible. On the other hand, most of us can say when a work has gone *beyond* the tolerable limit of viciousness. "Gerontion" succeeds where "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" does not. The uncommon nuttiness of *The Cantos*, and their common inhumanity, render them at last bad art. The Bollingen Prize Committee statement of 1948 based an award to Pound for his most flagrantly anti-Semitic cantos on "that objective perception of value on which civilized society must rest," and without wishing to resurrect an old controversy one must observe that the statement makes curious reading today.

Our first and truest responses to an author, of course, have nothing to do with politics. Thus Eliot and Pound may seem before all else the victims of rather impoverished imaginations, in comparison with Yeats and Lawrence, say, to choose names only from among the other Reactionaries. Whatever our preferences, we can be sure that writers like these will never be solved as critical problems: they are problematic. Yet a plain documentary approach must in the nature of things prove unfruitful when it comes to this type of writer, otherwise most fertile for critics. Mr. Panichas knows enough to cite *The Reactionaries*; he should have been forewarned by it. Political manifestations do not become manifestos just because a critic has pulled them outside of their proper context.

WHAT one objects to is the notion implicit in a book about politics and novelists instead of politics in novels, that an author's social views exist to be discussed separately from other aspects of his work. Consider for a moment the instance of Camus, a "problematic" left-wing writer. Who has not noticed, at one time or another, the resemblances between Camus and the Catholic writers of his time? One points to the surprising way Paneloux's sermons dominate *The Plague*; the pervasive sentiments about the sanctity of life in *The Rebel* (quite removed from Orwell's "decency"); the clearly religious note of contrition, happy guilt, struck throughout *The Fall*. And no reader is likely to forget Camus's characterization of revolutionary violence as necessary but inexcusable, or his insistence, apropos the Algerian situation, that he loved justice but loved his mother more. When we remember all this, however, does it add up to a meaningful picture of the author? Philip Thody in his judicial essay makes the point of view of this writer bear on specific works; but strangely we see only parallel and distinct tracks, art on one and politics on the other. An original critic of Camus, Conor Cruise O'Brien, lately published an excellent book in which the two merged into a single coherent pattern: showing how, for example, those divided loyalties between justice and moth-

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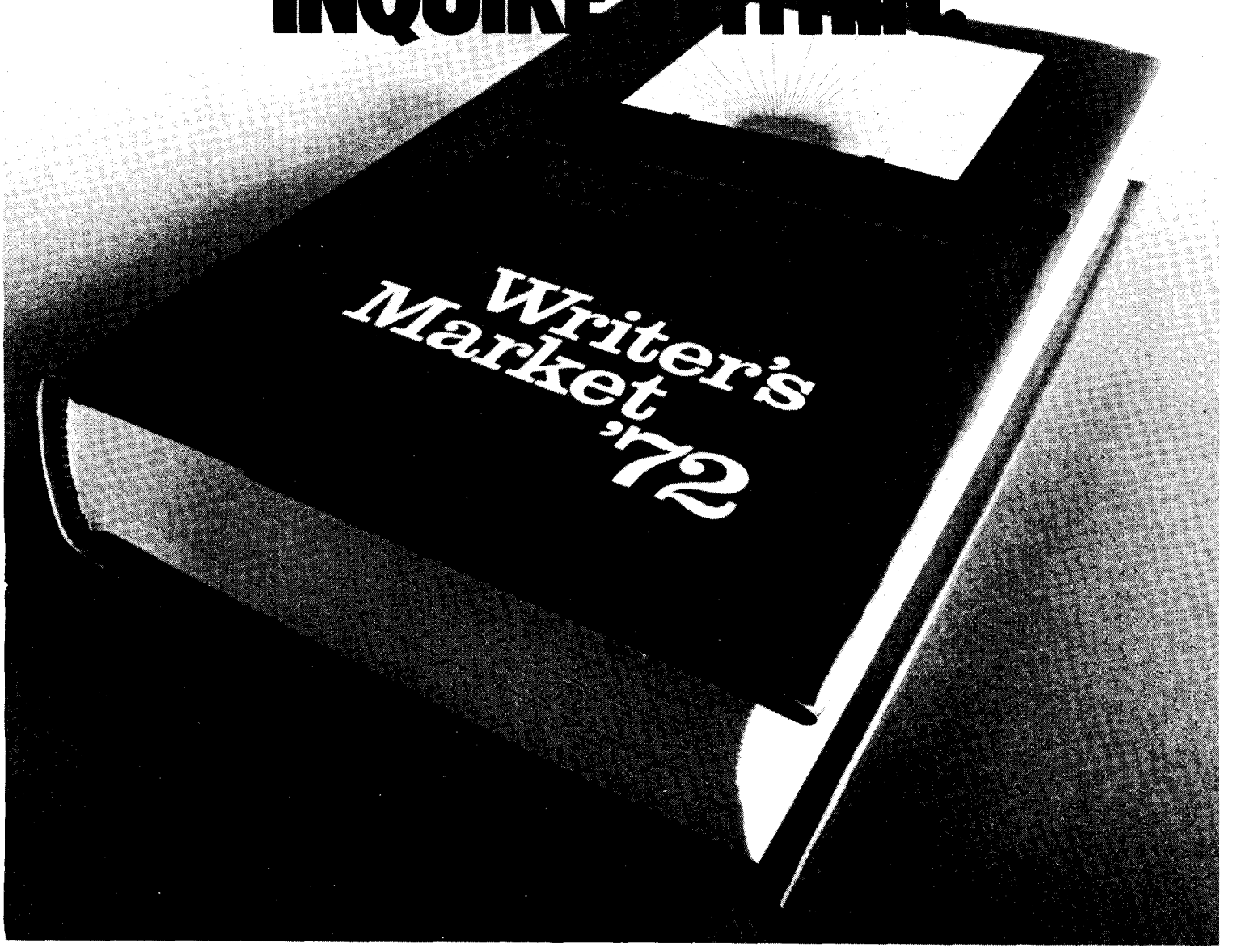

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er accounted for much that had always seemed unsatisfactory in the last half of *The Stranger*. But O'Brien could do this only because he was writing about art, not politics, and therefore was not asked to keep things parallel and distinct. It is the good critics in the anthology who are impeded by that demand; the others—I have not stayed very long with all of them—probably benefit by it. The sheer size of the book is, by the way, shameless: twenty-four essays, over three hundred big pages of novelistic politics. It sits uneasily on the shelf.

WITH films we are still on delicate ground, but not so much in danger of—over-relating. The poets of the cinema from the very first were also propagandists. Never mind that they were often bad poets (and I do mean Griffith): their influence, whatever we think of it, has been lasting. Bergman's recent films, for instance, in this highest time of his art, frequently show bits of Vietnam over a television set. The particular image of violence makes sense, I think, only in *Persona*, and if we ask why it appears elsewhere the answer can only be that the medium—as it is called—has set up an irresistible temptation. The opportunity once seen must be taken. *Politics and Film*, written by a pair of commendably circumspect Swedes, begins by recognizing this fact, and goes on to recount the more salient occasions of succumbing to the temptation. No theories are offered, thank goodness: these are not "media-studies" men. The book pretends to be nothing more than a historical survey, and it seems to me quite useful in its rather unambitious way.

There is a special sense of humor that goes along with the deadpan narrative manner: usually a simple plot summary is enough, as with "Thomas Ince's *Civilization*, in which Christ allows himself to be reincarnated in the body of a dead submarine engineer so that he can rise again and preach his gospel of peace to the world." That was during World War I, but the market item has not changed a great deal. The worst propaganda films have never been without a certain camp value, and *Mission to Moscow*, that old dead lump of Hollywood Stalinism, can now play to a howling audience of unbelievers. (Favorite line: "Don't you GPU boys ever get any sleep?") A film like *Mission to Moscow* was actually a late-blooming flower at Warner Brothers, where the great age of social consciousness was inaugurated by *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*. Dullness in this order of film does not matter in the least; if anything, it signifies a more conscientious consciousness. Messrs. Furhammar and Isaksson show how tenaciously large-studio propaganda has survived into our own day, though perhaps they go wrong in fretting so much about such pure exploitation pieces as *The Green Berets* and *Che!*

AT ALL events "safe" propaganda, establishment propaganda by either side, is far from the most interesting sort of political film. The Russian movement of the 1920's set out toward converting a mass audience—not just to cheer up old supporters, like all propaganda, but to generate new ones—and in the films of Eisenstein in particular we can witness the result. *Potemkin* is said to have caused near-riots wherever it was screened in Europe; eventually it had to be banned; but *October* and its successors fared less happily, and in due course Eisenstein became an artist to intellectuals—the worst of fates. The austerities of *Ivan the Terrible*, however (to say nothing of the eye-rolling), are not a distortion of his earlier style. They are rather its culmination. An opposing tradition in high propaganda came out of the Italian neo-realistic cinema associated with the name of Cesare Zavattini, about whose work *Politics and Film* summarizes the common view that "there was a metaphysical problem posed in many of these films, whether they were made by sensible Marxists or radical Catholics." Anyhow they have lost none of their power, while Eisenstein has come to appear the great director of stills that amount to stillbirths.

Politics and Film fails to do justice to the last category one might distinguish among political films: neither high nor low propaganda, but films that are thought political because of their connection with anxieties peculiar to their time and place. The *Dr. Mabuse* thrillers of Fritz Lang have an honorable status here. We can start with *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler*, a crazy, rambling affair full of theatrical disguises and pirouettes, with a running time of better than three hours and some of the best music ever composed for film. The central figure is Mabuse himself, a malignant psychic force hung over an entire city, enlisting the corrupt and conquering the innocent through his own private energy wrung out of sorcerer's magic, theosophy, and psychoanalysis. Next in the series, *The Last Testament of Dr. Mabuse* carries the distinction of having been banned during Hitler's first year of office. The insane Mabuse has been put away in a mental institution, whereupon he enters the spirit of his psychiatrist, a morose and surly type who, again, manages a gang of criminals. This time around, however, Mabuse-in-spirit is preaching slogans close to the real Nazi ones, and his plan involves an actual military conquest of the city. *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse* with Gert Frobe as the new policeman shows the director still going strong, but can hardly be given a political reading since it falls outside the Weimar period by a quarter of a century.

And what about the earlier films? Siegfried Kracauer, in a standard book, observes that *The Last Testament of Dr. Mabuse* "betrays the power of Nazi spirit [*sic*] over minds insufficiently equipped to counter its peculiar fascination." The point would not be worth arguing if the authors of *Politics and Film*, who as a rule deal cautiously with this critic, had not advanced his strictures against Lang a step further. "Hitler's enthusiasm for *Metropolis*," they quietly smirk, "is well documented." Yes—well documented by Lang himself, who has recalled in a number of interviews how Goebbels invited him to direct the big Nazi pictures; how Goebbels explained that he and the Fuehrer had liked *Metropolis* when they saw it in the provinces, and were sorry to have to ban *The Last Testament of Dr. Mabuse*; how the

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surprised artist answered, "I am tickled pink, Herr Goebbels," glanced up at the clock outside the window, and decided to leave Germany on the next train. To discover Nazism in Lang's films (in whatever degree latent) is probably hysterical. Certainly it is reductive. But no doubt it answers to an honest critical need, for movies of the Weimar period do give an impression of the general seediness, the corruption, the occult conception of power that led up to Nazism, and *they do not judge any of it*. Many people must have felt the uneasiness about *Jungle of Cities*, too, or in its different way *The Measures Taken*; above all we ought to feel uneasy about *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, that strange focal point of Weimar expressionism which does not fail to astonish us still. We have to remember, in any case, that Lang and others like him began as painters, so that we often feel them exposing life without our ever knowing just where they begin to condemn.

THE most impressive individual frames in film come from director-painters whose productions require fair treatment in reproductions. Mention of this fact brings one to the chiefly disappointing feature of *Politics and Film*: in a book with several frames from *The Triumph of the Will*, it seems a pity to have missed that remarkable drummer boy whose blank, committed face no one ever forgets. The illustrations hit too steady a level of banality, and often appear to have been lifted straight off the studio posters. However, I found two excellent things from *The Grapes of Wrath*, a film that had not been very much in my mind, and they brought me around to some of the differences between novels and films. Steinbeck's politics do not exactly make a fascinating subject for study, and few readers will respond to his book now as they might have responded during the Depression. John Ford's politics are, if possible, less fascinating than Steinbeck's. Yet when Henry Fonda speaks his final piece to Jane Darwell, saying how dearly he will fight wherever there are other men like him, something passes between actor and viewer that does not die over the generations.

We shall never have to learn how to watch old movies, either good or bad, though we shall always have to learn ways of reading the novelists of the past. Steinbeck has long since faded from memory, but what is true of him can be true of greater novelists also, for if we think too narrowly about their politics we run the risk of turning them all into Steinbecks. The problem would be considerably reduced, I suggest, if we did not begin by worrying about the politics of novelists from outside of their work. Films will never present this problem because what is ephemeral in them—the shapes of objects, the inflections of words, even old politics—commands our belief by its very immediacy.

The Fascist Temper

MY LIFE. By OSWALD MOSLEY. *Arlington House. 521 pp. $12.50.*

Reviewed by RUDOLF KLEIN

FORTY years ago Oswald Mosley committed political suicide. In 1918 this dashing young baronet—descended from a long line of wealthy English gentry, boasting of a splendid war record, a fencer of international caliber—became a Conservative MP at the age of twenty-two. Two years later he resigned from that party in protest against the brutality of the Black and Tans in their campaign against the Irish nationalists. In 1926 he became a Labour Member of Parliament, having established a reputation as a formidable speaker both in the House of Commons and on platforms in the country, and in 1929 was appointed a Minister in the Labour government of Ramsay MacDonald.

All seemed set for a political career of unlimited prospects. But a year later he was once again in the political wilderness, this time for good. In 1930 he resigned from the Labour government, in protest against its refusal to adopt his radical program for dealing with soaring unemployment by what would now be called a policy of reflation. In 1931 he founded his own movement, the New Party, after narrowly failing to carry the Labour rank-and-file with him. Soon the various intellectuals, (like John Strachey and Harold Nicolson who had joined him in this enterprise) abandoned him. And in 1932 the New Party was replaced by the British Union of Fascists. Mosley had chosen the road to power charted by Mussolini and Hitler.

But Britain, as it turned out, was not Italy or Germany. Mosley's effective political career was over at the age of forty. The man who, in the view of some of his contemporaries, could have become either a Conservative or Labour Prime Minister, had condemned himself to failure. Had the 1939-45 war taken a different turn, this might not have been so; fortunately, though, Mosley's opportunity never came. For forty years he has been a ghost on the British political scene, rattling his chains, occasionally trying (not very successfully) his hand at poltergeisting, always seeking to attract attention and sympathy.

His autobiography is therefore essentially a story of self-destruction. Of course this is not how Mosley sees it. On the contrary, his memoirs are permeated by an almost pathetic defiance—a determination not to blame himself but events for the fiasco of his life. Writing in his seventies, he stresses the achievements of septuagenarians and octogenarians like Adenauer, de Gaulle, and Mao Tse-tung. To the last page, Mosley is the actor who, having learned the role of Hamlet, feels certain that the call to play it must come if not today, then tomorrow, and if not tomorrow then the day after: we leave him at the end of the book expounding his ideas about Britain's place in Europe. The catastrophe which will vindicate him is around the corner. Like a forgotten actor, too, he flourishes his old press-cuttings (or at least the favorable ones), quoting the various tributes paid to him by the famous. Characteristically, though, Mosley reserves most of his sympathy for

RUDOLF KLEIN *is a research associate at London University. He contributed "Ministering to Britain" to our February number.*

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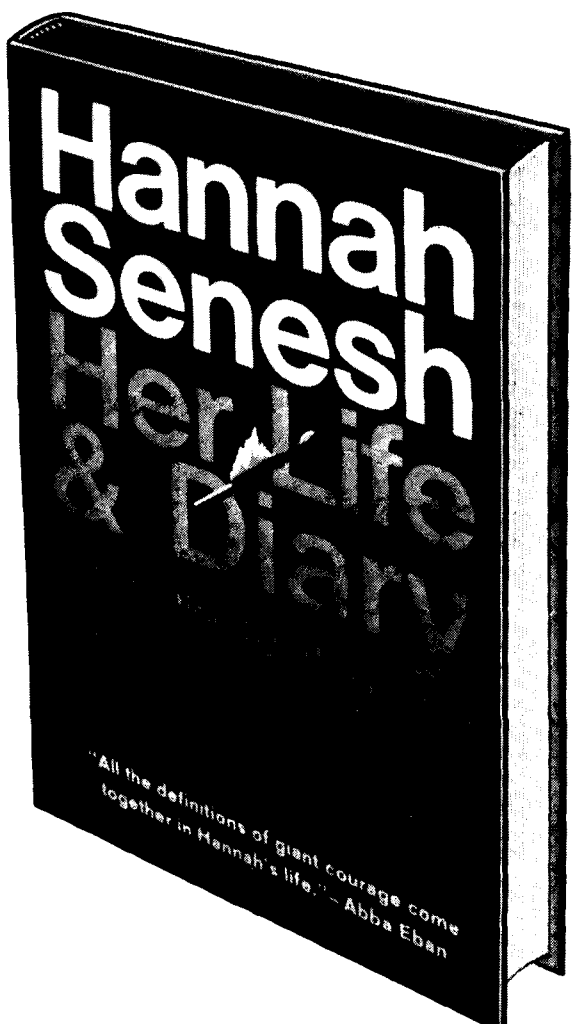
himself and his immediate family; the soft streak of self-pity which runs through the book is in contrast to the sharp, witty, and often brutal anecdotes about his contemporaries. It is easy to see why he won the reputation of a formidable conversationalist and orator. The portraits of some of the political eminences of the 20's—like Lloyd George and Lord Curzon, Mosley's first father-in-law, and of the Labour Ministers in the 1929-31 government—are always sharp and occasionally funny.

Sometimes, though, the impression left by these vinegary sketches is that of a man paying off old scores. Thus Beatrice Webb—the great mother figure of the Labour movement—is dismissed as a "living caricature of the attitude sometimes described as feminine," intellectually entirely dependent on her husband. It is an eccentric but perhaps not surprising judgment, remembering Beatrice Webb's own perceptive and prophetic remarks made in her diary in 1931 and subsequently published: "A foreign journalist at the Labour party Conference nicknamed him 'The English Hitler.' But the English electorate would not stand a Hitler. Mosley has bad health, a slight intelligence, and an unstable character—I doubt whether he has the tenacity of a Hitler. He also lacks genuine fanaticism. Deep down in his heart he is a cynic." Altogether, Mosley, on the evidence of his contemporaries and of his own book, emerges not as a demonic figure but as an opportunist unable to resist temptation and inclined to confuse temptation with revelation.

Again and again in his memoirs Mosley stresses that he neither is nor ever was an anti-Semite or a racist. It just so happened that the British Union of Fascists attracted the anti-Semites of the 30's and that their main scene of political activity was London's East End (because of its easy accessibility, Mosley claims) where the Jewish population, and hence friction, were greatest. Similarly, it just so happened that Mosley's own postwar return to the political scene, as a very unsuccessful candidate for Parliament in 1959, was staged in London's North Kensington where shortly before there had

One of the great stories of Jewish resistance to tyranny.



Hannah Senesh is one of Israel's greatest national heroines. A native of Hungary, she moved to Palestine just before World War II and later volunteered to join an elite parachute corps formed by the British. She dropped behind Nazi lines in Yugoslavia where she joined the partisans and later made her way across the border to Hungary to warn the Jewish population of their impending fate. She was captured, brutally tortured, and finally executed in 1944 at the age of 23.

From the age of 13 she kept a diary which is a statement of her innermost life, written without vanity or any posturing bravura. Behind the diary and the poems there stands an extraordinary human being: she volunteered for the most dangerous of all jobs, took a risk, and lost.

HANNAH SENESH: HER LIFE AND DIARY includes not only the diary but many of her poems; a memoir by her mother; and accounts by parachutists who accompanied her on her final mission. A film based on the life of Hannah Senesh is in preparation. April, $6.95

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been Britain's first "race riot" between whites and blacks.

Seemingly Mosley has never been able to resist the temptation to exploit—if only tacitly—prejudices which he himself does not share: contemptuous in his book about the myth of the "Jewish conspiracy," he appears to have been unable to persuade his naive followers of the 30's of the mistaken nature of their vulgar, crude anti-Semitism. Perhaps he did not try quite hard enough. Or conceivably, writing so many years after the events, his memory has—not surprisingly—played him false on occasion.

At times Mosley's chronology appears a little muddled. Take the question of the British Union of Fascists' use of blackshirted strong-arm men. Mosley concedes that uniforms were an error: one of the very, very few mistakes to which he admits. But he argues that the use of strong-arm men was forced on him by the attempts of the Communists to wreck his meetings and to prevent him from speaking. To support this argument he describes at length incidents at a rally in 1934. However, the diary of Harold Nicolson—at that time a close friend of Mosley—suggests a rather different perspective. As early as 1931 there is a reference to "muscular bands of young men" being attracted to the movement and by 1932 Mosley himself was talking about setting up the equivalent of the "S.S. or Schutzstaffel organization of the Nazis."

Once again Mosley may have succumbed to temptation—that of exploiting an opportunity provided by the Communists and rationalizing as a defense of free speech his own desire to build up a paramilitary organization, to which he seems to have been emotionally attracted both as an ex-officer and (more creditably) as someone who liked the classless atmosphere of the barrack-room. And having done so he naturally —though to his own surprise—provoked the violence which he himself condemns.

The British Union of Fascists happily was never more than a comic side-turn in the margins of political history. What of the mainstream of fascism? Where does Mosley stand now? Mussolini's morality is approvingly described as "advancing the interests of his country and in a general sense of serving the renaissance of European man." There is a further proviso: "I should doubt from my observations of him that he was guilty of the relatively few crimes imputed to him." (This casual dismissal of Mussolini's methods for dealing with political opponents, admittedly mild by Hitler's standards, contrasts piquantly with Mosley's account of his own detention during the war: here complaints about poor conditions in jail, bedbugs, and imprisonment without trial are not stinted.)

Again, the murder of several million Jews by Hitler is condemned without reservation. But who was to blame? Not so much Hitler, in Mosley's view, as those who brought about war in 1939 instead of seeking an accommodation with Germany. If the war had been avoided, he maintains, the lives of the Jews and others would have been saved: "Most people go rather mad in war, and Hitler in this respect went very mad." A study of the pogroms and killings of the 30's might suggest that it did not need a war to break Hitler's sanity; but this is not a conclusion drawn by Mosley.

ALL this would indicate—rightly—that Mosley has written a rather distasteful and unconvincing apology for a wasted life. Yet his book is perhaps worth reading if only for its oblique but real relevance to today. For, in some ways, it is a political morality story with disturbing implications for our own era.

Mosley, it is worth reminding oneself, committed political suicide in what was a good cause. He was right to resign in 1930 from a Labour government which was utterly incapable of dealing with massive unemployment. He was right to argue for economic expansion, at a time when the conventional wisdom deplored deficit financing and stressed retrenchment. He was right to denounce the folly of the politicians of both main parties, since Conservative and Labour leaders were equally inept in their handling of economic affairs. He was right to be indignant and contemptuous about a generation of politicians remarkable chiefly for their fumbling mediocrity and their determination to keep outstanding personalities like Churchill and Lloyd George out of power.

In all this the Mosley of the 1930 resignation and even the Mosley of the New Party, which attracted many men of genuine idealism, is not all that difficult to imagine in the contemporary clothes of present-day political protest. There are whole passages in his book couched in a neo-Marcusean idiom. Here for example is Mosley's version of "repressive tolerance" in a passage where he defends his use of strong-arm men to protect his meetings: "It is possible either to kill freedom by force or to smother it by the power of money with the connivance of the State. There is not much freedom left to the individual with a new opinion, when the press, radio, and television are denied him. . . . Freedom of speech in face of the established parties joins the economic freedom of the individual in face of the capitalist combines, which in time-honored definition long since granted the 'liberty' to sleep on a bench in the park to a man who cannot afford a room at the Ritz."

It was no accident that some of those who left conventional politics with Mosley eventually landed in the Communist party. For Mosley himself—like many of the 30's Communists—was an example of a man whose ideals were corrupted by the means chosen to pursue them: a justified sense of disillusion with the "system" having been transformed into a millenarian belief in the need for some form of mystic regeneration of society. Unlike Mosley's contemporaries, those who now expound this sort of emotional, all-or-nothing approach to politics—even while repudiating both fascism and Communism—have the advantage of being able to consult the record. They at any rate could profit from a reading of these memoirs which suggest that the most heinous political sin may be lack of self-doubt and an excessive consciousness of one's own righteousness.

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